

# Ordinary and Exotic: A Cultural History of Curry in Australia

by

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14, 990 Words

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Bachelor of Arts with Honours in History

History and Classics Discipline, School of Humanities

University of Tasmania

November 2017

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Frieda Moran

Tasmania      Australia

With love and thanks to my family and friends.

Much gratitude to my teachers.

Especially Dr. Nicki Tarulevicz,

My wonderful supervisor.

Many thanks to Professor Stefan Petrow, Professor Philippa Mein Smith, Dr. Kristyn Harman and Dr. Elizabeth Freeman for their guidance and assistance.

Thank you

Dr. Cecilia Leong-Salobir and Jacqui Newling for their assistance and words of encouragement.

My fellow students for their enthusiasm.

The Country Women's Association in Tasmania for access to their cookbooks.

And to everybody who shared their stories of curry with me.

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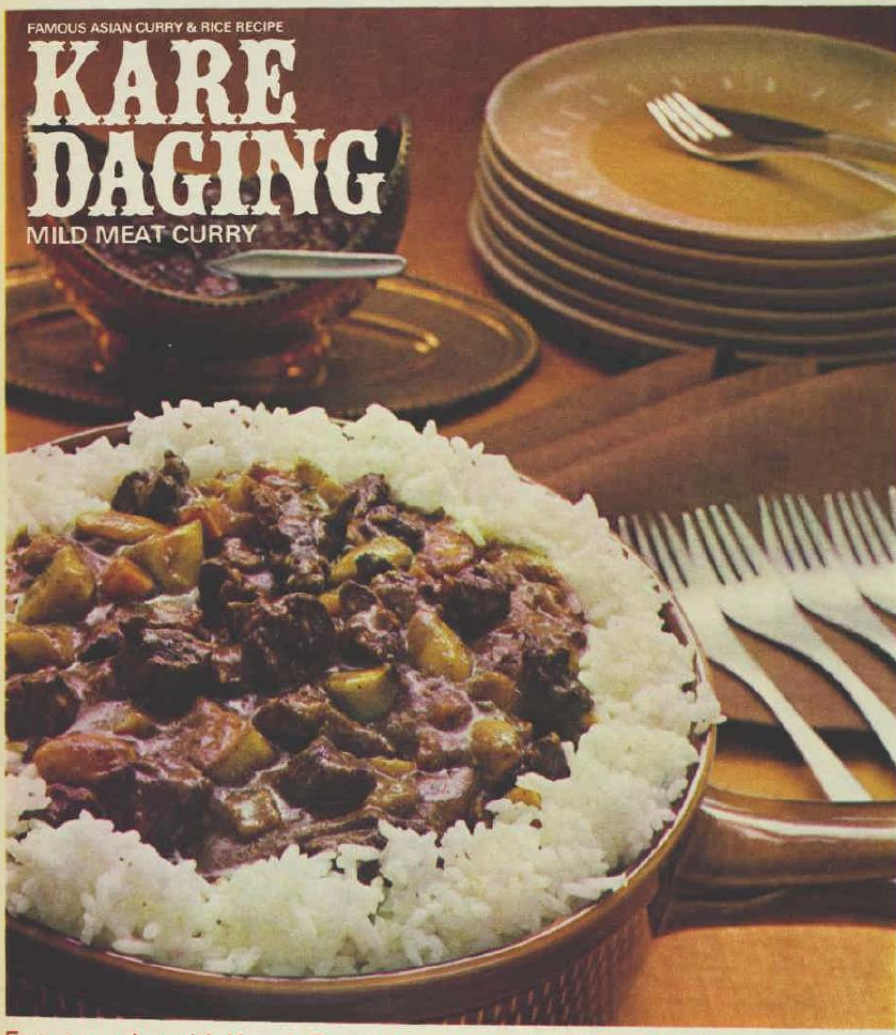
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## Introduction

FAMOUS ASIAN CURRY & RICE RECIPE

# KARE DAGING

MILD MEAT CURRY



**Easy to make with Keen's Curry & ready-cooked Sunwhite Rice**

**MILD MEAT CURRY**  
 2 lb. lamb or hogget (cut from shoulder);  
 1/2 cup seasoned flour; 2 oz. butter or  
 dripping; 2 large onions (chopped); 2  
 level dessertspoons Keen's Curry; 2  
 level dessertspoons sugar; 1 tablespoon  
 tomato sauce; 1 tablespoon plum jam or  
 chutney; 1 cup diced carrot; 1/2 pint  
 stock or water; 1/4 cup sultanas; 1 large  
 granny smith (peeled, diced); 1/2 cup coco  
 nut; 1/2 cup dried apricots (chopped);  
 juice 1/2 lemon; 1/2 cup evaporated milk;

**ready-cooked Sunwhite Long Grain Rice.**  
 Cut the meat into bite-sized pieces and  
 toss in seasoned flour. Melt butter and  
 fry onions and curry powder for 3 min-  
 utes. Add meat and brown. Stir in the  
 sugar, tomato sauce, plum jam (or chut-  
 ney), carrot and stock. Cover and simmer  
 very gently for 1-1 1/2 hours or until the  
 meat is almost tender. Add the sultanas,  
 apple, coconut, dried apricots, lemon  
 juice and milk. Simmer for a further 20  
 minutes. Serve with fluffy rice. Serves 6.

**Keen's Curry.** Authentic Indian-flavour  
 curry. Australia's most popular curry.  
**Sunwhite Long Grain Rice.** It looks really  
 elegant, yet is budget priced. Many people  
 prefer it for special rice dishes such as the one  
 above, and fried rice and salads.

**Tupperware Pak-N-Stor Container.** Special  
 seal to lock in freshness and lock out  
 dryness. (Call Tupperware distributors; Pink  
 Pages under "Plastics").

**FREE** all new rice recipe book. Send 5c  
 stamped, addressed envelope to Rice Cookery  
 Bureau, Box 432, G.P.O., Sydney, 2001.

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Figure 1. "Keen's 1969"<sup>1</sup>

In 1969, "Australia's most popular curry", Keen's, offered consumers an "Authentic Indian-flavour curry", with a recipe for "Kare Daging" (see figure 1). The promise of a sophisticated cultural experience was tempered in several ways. In addition to their curry powder, ingredients for the mild lamb curry included tomato sauce, plum jam or chutney, sultanas, a Granny Smith

<sup>1</sup> *Australia Women's Weekly* (AWW) 17 September 1969, 56.

apple, dried apricots and sugar. Visually, the exoticness of the dish was also moderated. An ornate brass plate and crescent-moon dish are upstaged by the curry, surrounded by a ring of rice in heavy brown crockery, and a row of silver forks, signalling its appropriateness for western consumption. This advertisement epitomises how curry was thought about, not just in the moment of production, but over the two centuries of curry's history in Australia. Curry is simultaneously conceptualised as familiar, and yet exotic and other. This theme, to varying degrees, has characterised ideas of curry in Australian history.

Curry is understood in this thesis as anything using the term, including foods that used some form of curry as an ingredient, whether powder, paste or sauce. This study is interested in what it means, in scholar Allen S. Weiss' words, for a "version of a dish to appear at this time and place."<sup>2</sup> It is the domestic consumption of curry, as opposed to restaurant, that is my focus. While the origins of curry are much contested, my understanding is founded in historian Cecilia Leong-Salobir's argument that the foodstuff emerged through a process of "negotiation and collaboration" between Anglo and Indigenous Indian populations.<sup>3</sup> Curry, for Leong-Salobir, is useful in examining the "porous boundaries of colonialism in areas of race and domestic relationships."<sup>4</sup> Historian Mary Procida likewise sees curry as a hybrid dish, exemplifying "the active participation of the colonized peoples in shaping the daily lives of the imperialists."<sup>5</sup>

This thesis reveals a long and complicated history of curry in Australia. A temporal approach illustrates how curry has been represented and understood through time; showing it has dominantly been thought of as simultaneously familiar and foreign. This story links to some of the broader themes of Australian history, particularly around national identity, connection to Britain, and the negotiation of that relationship. This is a cultural history, and a textual analysis approach has been undertaken.<sup>6</sup> Cookbooks have been read with advertisements,

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<sup>2</sup> Allen S. Weiss, "Authenticity," *Gastronomica* 11.4 (2001), 77.

<sup>3</sup> Cecilia Leong-Salobir, *Food Culture in Colonial Asia: A Taste of Empire* (London: Routledge, 2011), 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>5</sup> Procida argued that Anglo-Indian cookbooks were more than prescriptive texts, but assisted in the alteration of domestic and gender roles of the Raj, allowing women to "contribute to the creation, collection, and dissemination of imperial knowledge." Mary A. Procida, "Feeding the Imperial Appetite: Imperial Knowledge and Anglo-Indian Discourse," *Journal of Women's History* 15.2 (2003), 143.

<sup>6</sup> Jan Ifversen, "Text, Discourse, Concept: Approaches to Textual Analysis," *Kontur* 7 (2003), 60-69; For a discussion about the differences between studies of material culture and textual analysis, see Leora Auslander, Amy Bentley, Leor Halevi, H. Otto Sibum, and Christopher Witmore, "AHR conversation: Historians and the Study of Material Culture," *American Historical Review* 114.5 (2009), 1355-404.

magazines and newspapers, providing insights into changing conceptions of curry, and Australian culture. Given the abundance of material pertaining to curry, the study is not exhaustive, but instead presents exemplars of how curry has been thought about.

Curry is significant in its ability to illuminate the entanglement of the everyday with important historical issues such as empire, race, class and identity. Australia presents an ideal site for examining curry given its relatively recent and concise colonial history, its continued status as a settler society, and its location within the Asia-Pacific region. In line with scholars such as Jean Duruz and Adele Wessell, this study attempts to shift the gaze of Australian food studies outwards.<sup>7</sup> It does so by exploring the connections of Australian food culture with other international sites, rather than examining Australia as an isolated experience, or simply in relation to the colonial metropole, Britain.

The thesis is structured into three chapters, the first two framed by two broad time periods, the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and the third a Tasmanian case study, encompassing both centuries. Chapter one examines key moments in 19<sup>th</sup> century Australia, showing curry arrived earlier than popularly conceived. The introduction of the foodstuff to the continent illustrates flows of empire, supporting a conceptualisation of the imperial system as a web or fabric model, rather than a centre and periphery model, and highlights Tasmania's role as a node in this web. Examining cookbooks reveals curry's rapid establishment, its development to local conditions, and demonstrates how migrants adapted to their new environment. Curry was simultaneously absorbed, and yet remained foreign, in the burgeoning food culture, reflecting negotiation of Australian identities.

The second chapter explores the ways curry was thought about in key moments in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The chapter seeks to balance the temporal frame with thematic concerns, recognising the overlapping of ideas. In the newly-federated Australia, curry was consumed in increasingly diverse ways. International events and forces shaped the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and also shaped curry. Three strands - concerns over authenticity, sweet curries, and increased

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<sup>7</sup> Jean Duruz, "Eating at the Borders: Culinary Journeys," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 23.1 (2005), 51-69; Jean Duruz, "From Malacca to Adelaide...: Fragments Toward a Biography of Cooking, Yearning and *Laksa*" in Sidney C. H. Cheung and Tan Chee-Beng, eds., *Food and Foodways in Asia: Resource, Tradition and Cooking* (London: Routledge, 2007), 183-200; Adele Wessell, "There's No Taste like Home: The Food of Empire," in Kate Darian-Smith and others, eds., *Exploring the British World: Identity, Cultural Production, Institutions* (Melbourne: RMIT Publishing, 2004), 811-21.



sophistication – characterised curry’s presence in 20<sup>th</sup> century Australia; often existing in the same space. The adoption of other cultures’ dishes under the name of curry is also analysed.

Keen’s Curry Powder is the case study at the centre of chapter three. As a Tasmanian brand established in the 1860s, Keen’s became a pantry staple across Australia in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, providing a wealth of advertising materials. It offers an exemplar to further tease out themes including connections between Tasmania and the empire, the local and the international, curry as simultaneously familiar and foreign, and the negotiation of identity.

## Sources

In order to establish an understanding of how curry was likely cooked and consumed, newspapers, cookbooks and magazines have been examined over time and not in isolation. If viewed as prescriptive texts, cookbooks can tell us what was considered appropriate, what was not, and the aspirations of societies at a particular moment.<sup>8</sup> My approach emphasises community cookbooks, as their “treasured recipes” are more likely to have been cooked than commercial cookbooks, with recipes often attributed to individuals.

The first Australian cookbook was published in 1864. During the 1890s, these texts came to proliferate in Australia. Important resources for this study, a minimum of two per decade have been analysed. The majority of cookbooks are Tasmanian, reflecting my geographical location, and the scope of this project. In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the vast number of cookbooks becomes an issue and thus comprehensive, rather than themed, cookbooks are focused upon.<sup>9</sup> Magazines, most notably the *Australian Women’s Weekly* (AWW), are also important, as a recognised cultural mediator with popular impact. During the 1960s, for example, one in four Australian households received the magazine.<sup>10</sup> The high-end magazine, *Epicurean*, provides contrast to the AWW during the 1960s and 1970s.

My textual approach has been driven by materials. As will be shown, these diverse sources provide evidence of how, consciously and unconsciously, curry has been conceptualised through Australian history. The time period of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries

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<sup>8</sup> John E. Finn, "The Perfect Recipe: Taste and Tyranny, Cooks and Citizens," *Food, Culture & Society* 14.4 (2011), 503-24.

<sup>9</sup> The exception to this is curry themed cookbooks. I have also used Charmaine Solomon’s *South East Asian Cookbook*, which presents a significant interest in curry, and marks a shift in conceptions of curry.

<sup>10</sup> Susan Sheridan, "Eating the Other: Food and Cultural Difference in the *Australian Women’s Weekly* in the 1960s," *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 21.3 (2000), 320, 323; The AWW is available on Trove between 1933-1982.

encompasses a substantial sweep of history, allowing the study to explore the arrival of curry in the colonies, for the development of broad themes to play out, and significant social change to take place.<sup>11</sup> This thesis draws on a broad and interdisciplinary body of literature.

## Literature Review

For some, food is necessarily an interdisciplinary project.<sup>12</sup> Food Studies as a discipline emerged from fields such as agrarian and rural history, anthropology, and women's studies.<sup>13</sup> With anthropologist Sydney Mintz's seminal 1985 work on sugar, food came to be recognised as a "serious" area of study.<sup>14</sup> Mintz's study clearly articulated the entanglement of important historical topics (empire, slavery, power, economics and environment) with food and everyday life, legitimising and stimulating the growth of Food Studies as a scholarly discipline.<sup>15</sup>

Initial studies followed in Mintz's footsteps, making connections between foodstuffs and global history, in particular, political, economic and cultural change.<sup>16</sup> From here, the intersections with women's studies, the environment, globalisation, race and class received increasing attention. Cultural histories exploring the "social meanings and functions" of food

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<sup>11</sup> Australia's first newspaper, the *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, was published initially on 3 March 1803.

<sup>12</sup> The study of food intersects with topics as diverse as (and certainly not limited to) hunger, empire, industrialisation, colonialism, environment, economy, and nationalism, to identity, gender, class, popular culture and community.

<sup>13</sup> See for example, Agrarian: Robert Forster, and Orest A. Ranum, *Rural Society in France: Selections from the Annales; Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977); Jack Temple Kirby, *Rural Worlds Lost: The American South, 1920-1960* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986); Anthropology: Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Raw and The Cooked*, trans. John Weightman and Doreen Weightman (New York: Harper and Row, 1969); Kwang-chih Chang, *Food in Chinese Culture: Anthropological and Historical Perspectives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977); Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger* (New York: Praeger, 1966); Women's Studies: Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); Carole Counihan, *The Anthropology of Food and Body: Gender, Meaning, and Power* (New York: Routledge, 1999).

<sup>14</sup> Sydney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1985).

<sup>15</sup> Alfred W. Crosby foreshadowed these themes in his 1972 work, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1972).

<sup>16</sup> See for example: Felipe Fernández-Armesto, *Near a Thousand Tables: A History of Food* (New York: Free Press, 2002); Kenneth Kipple – several works including *A Movable Feast: Ten Millennia of Food Globalization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Jeffrey M. Pilcher, *Planet Taco: A Global History of Mexican Food* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); George Ritzer, *The McDonaldization of Society* (London: Sage Publications, 1993); Peter J. Atkins Lummel, and Peter, Derek J. Oddy, eds. *Food and the City in Europe since 1800* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007); Richard Tapper and Sami Zubaid, eds. *Culinary Cultures of the Middle East* (London: IB Tauris, 1994); David Grigg, "Income, Industrialization and Food Consumption," *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 85.1 (1994), 3-14.

burgeoned.<sup>17</sup> Especially relevant here are studies exploring junctions with empire, identity, race and class.<sup>18</sup> More recent works have sought to push studies of food beyond national borders.<sup>19</sup> Also notable are “biographies” of particular foodstuffs, looking at milk, potatoes, and chocolate, among others.<sup>20</sup> Curry has been the focus of several popular biographies. Historian David Burton analysed Anglo-Indian food culture, alongside colonial accounts and recipes.<sup>21</sup> The origins of the dish are traced by Lizzie Collingham, and Colleen Taylor-Sen’s work is an accessible overview of interpretations of the dish around the world.<sup>22</sup>

Reflecting how the field of food studies has become more complex and nuanced, professional organisations and dedicated scholarly journals have flourished.<sup>23</sup> A steady increase in the number of guides to the field signifies the transitioning of food studies into a discipline in its own right, with a corresponding need for pedagogical tools.<sup>24</sup> Indeed, they can be seen as reflecting a coming of age for the field.

The process by which cookbooks have been accepted as legitimate sources reflects that of food studies as a discipline. The worth of these texts as historical primary sources has been

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<sup>17</sup> Anna Meigs, “Food as a Cultural Construction,” in Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik, eds., *Food and Culture: A Reader* (Routledge: New York, 1997), 107.

<sup>18</sup> See for example: Susie Khamis, “Class in a Tea Cup: The Bushells Brand, 1895- 1920,” in Robert Crawford, Judith Smart and Kim Humphery, eds., *Consumer Australia: Historical Perspectives*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010, 13-26; Psyche A. Williams-Forson, *Building Houses out of Chicken Legs: Black women, Food, and Power* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

<sup>19</sup> Cecilia Leong-Salobir, Krishnendu Ray and Jaclyn Rohel, “Introducing a Special Issue on Rescuing Taste from the Nation: Oceans, Borders, and Culinary Flows,” *Gastronomica* 16.1 (2016), 9-15.

<sup>20</sup> E. Melanie DuPuis, *Nature’s Perfect Food: How Milk Became America’s Drink* (New York: New York University Press, 2002); John Reader, *Potato: A History of the Propitious Esculent* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Emma Robertson, *Chocolate, Women and Empire: a Social and Cultural History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009).

<sup>21</sup> David Burton, *The Raj at the Table: A Culinary History of the British in India* (London: Faber and Faber, 1993).

<sup>22</sup> Lizzie Collingham, *Curry: A Tale of Cooks and Conquerors* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Colleen Taylor Sen, *Curry: A Global History* (London: Reaktion, 2009); A memoir and cookbook supplemented by historical information has been authored by Jennifer Brennan, *Curries and Bungles: A Memoir and Cookbook of the British Raj* (Boston: Periplus, 2000).

<sup>23</sup> See for example, *Food, Culture and Society*; *Gastronomica*; *Food and History*, *Locale*; the Oxford Symposium of Food and Cookery: for an example of their published papers and proceedings see, Hashi Raychaudhuri and Tapan Raychaudhuri, “Not by Curry Alone: An Introductory Essay on Indian Cuisines for a Western Audience,” in Alan Davidson, ed. *National & Regional Styles of Cookery: Oxford Symposium 1981 Proceedings* (London: Prospect Books, 1981), 45-56.

<sup>24</sup> See for example: Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik, *Food and Culture: A Reader* (Routledge: New York, 2008); Warren Belasco, *Food: the Key Concepts* (Oxford: Berg, 2008); Jeff Miller and Jonathon Deutsch, *Food Studies: An Introduction to Research Methods* (Oxford: Berg, 2008); Jeffrey M. Pilcher, *The Oxford Handbook of Food History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Ken Abala, *Routledge International Handbook of Food Studies* (New York: Routledge, 2014); Paul Freedman, Joyce E. Chaplin and Ken Abala, *Food in Time and Place: The American Historical Association Companion to Food History* (New York: Routledge, 2014); Jeffrey M. Pilcher, “The Embodied Imagination in Recent Writings on Food History,” *The American Historical Review* 121.3 (2016), 861-87.

thoroughly debated. They have been called, “scarce, flawed, irreplaceable records”, and the “humble literature of complex civilizations” that “tell unusual cultural tales”.<sup>25</sup> Arguments have largely focused on whether cookbooks reflect actual practice, or if they should be viewed as prescriptive texts.<sup>26</sup> These issues apply equally to many primary sources. Literature scholar Nicola Humble argues cookbooks give clues to the practices and aspirations of everyday life, and special occasions.<sup>27</sup> They are cultural artefacts, reflecting much about the individuals and societies that produce and utilise them.<sup>28</sup> As sites of identity construction, culinary texts can delineate, reinforce, or challenge cultural boundaries of gender, race, class, and religion.<sup>29</sup>

Published cookbooks received little attention until the 1980s. Sociologist Jack Goody used them to show how cuisines were differentiated by class.<sup>30</sup> Anthropologist Arjun Appadurai’s landmark 1988 essay analysing the role played by cookbooks in the creation of national identities and ideologies has been one of the most influential in the field.<sup>31</sup> These studies legitimised cookbooks as cultural artefacts worthy of scholarly attention. Compiled bibliographies of cookbooks from particular geographic regions and/or time periods have also emerged.<sup>32</sup> In line with Michel Foucault’s ideas concerning the function and organisation of knowledge systems, these bibliographies help define the boundaries of the discipline.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Barbara Ketcham Wheaton, “Cookbooks as Resources for Social History,” in Paul Freedman, Ken Albala, and Joyce E. Chaplin, eds., *Food In Time and Place: The American Historical Association Companion to Food History* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2014), 276; Arjun Appadurai, “How to Make a National Cuisine: Cookbooks in Contemporary India,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 30.1 (1988), 3.

<sup>26</sup> Barbara Ketcham Wheaton, “Cookbooks as Resources,” 278.

<sup>27</sup> Nicola Humble, *Culinary Pleasures: Cook Books and the Transformation of British Food* (London: Faber and Faber, 2005), 2-3.

<sup>28</sup> Appadurai, “How to Make a National Cuisine”, 3.

<sup>29</sup> Although interest in women’s studies burgeoned from the late 1960s onwards, it was unpublished manuscripts, notes and recipe collections that initially tended to be scrutinised for evidence of everyday lives. For studies of cookbooks see: Janet Theopano, *Eat My Words: Reading Women’s Lives through the Cookbooks They Wrote* (New York, Palgrave MacMillan, 2002); Elizabeth Ransom, and Wynne Wright, “Constructing Culinary Knowledge: Reading Rural Community Cookbooks,” *Food, Culture & Society*, 16.4, (2013), 669-689; Laura Schenone, *A Thousand Years Over a Hot Stove: A History of American Women Told Through Food, Recipes, and Remembrances* (New York: WW Norton & Company, 2003).

<sup>30</sup> Jack Goody, *Cooking, Cuisine and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

<sup>31</sup> Appadurai, “How to Make a National Cuisine”; Humble, *Culinary Pleasures*, also uses cookbooks to examine changes in national food habits, with respect to Britain.

<sup>32</sup> Mary Anna DuSablon, *America’s Collectible Cookbooks: The History, The Politics, The Recipes* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1994); Elizabeth Driver, *A Bibliography of Cookery Books Published in Britain, 1875-1914* (London: Prospect Books, 1989); Elizabeth Driver, *Culinary Landmarks: A Bibliography of Canadian Cookbooks, 1825-1949* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008).

<sup>33</sup> Michel Foucault, (1969) *Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon, 1972), 137-8.

Sociologist Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson, historians Edward Geist and Megan J. Elias have explored the intersection of nation building, ideology, and cuisine.<sup>34</sup> Literature scholar Helen Pike Bauer has argued that consumers of Anglo-Indian cookbooks, like the food they ate, were defined by their hybrid identities.<sup>35</sup> Differentiating between commercial and community cookbooks has given further nuance to the field.<sup>36</sup> Australian journal, *TEXT*, published a special on cookbooks in Australasia, providing counterpoints to American and European dominance.<sup>37</sup> Most recently, seven centuries of cookbook history has been written by historian Henry Notaker.<sup>38</sup>

As scholars from Robert Darnton to Ted Striphas have established, print culture has informed and altered society.<sup>39</sup> This is particularly true of 19<sup>th</sup> century Australia, where printed material provided vital communications between government and people, to the Empire, and

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<sup>34</sup> Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson, "Culinary Nationalism," *Gastronomica*, 10.1 (2010), 102-109; Edward Geist, "Cooking Bolshevik: Anastas Mikoian and the Making of the Book about Delicious and Healthy Food," *Russian Review* 71.2 (2012), 295-313; Megan J. Elias, *Food on the Page: Cookbooks and American Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017); See also: Cookbook illustrations in 18<sup>th</sup> century Britain have been examined by historian Troy Bickham, who concludes that they contributed to the "commercialisation of domestic life", Troy Bickham, "Defining Good Food: Cookery-Book Illustrations in England," *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 31.3 (2008), 473-489.

<sup>35</sup> Helen Pike Bauer, "Eating in the Contact Zone: Food and Identity in Anglo-India," in Narin Hassan and Tamara S. Wagner, eds., *Consuming Culture in the Long Nineteenth Century: Narratives of Consumption, 1700-1900*. Lanham, Lexington Books, 2007, 95-106; See also, April Bullock, "The Cosmopolitan Cookbook: Glass, Taste, and Foreign Foods in Victorian Cookery Books," *Food, Culture and Society* 15.2 (2012), 437-454; Sherrie Inness, *Secret Ingredients: Race, Gender, and Class at the Dinner Table* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006); Rafia Zafar, "The Signifying Dish: Autobiography and History in Two Black Women's Cookbooks," *Feminist Studies* 25.2 (1999), 449-69; Gender and religion meet in historian Lara Rabinovitch's, "A Peek into their Kitchens: Postwar Jewish Community Cookbooks in the United States," *Food, Culture and Society* 14.1 (2011), 91-116.

<sup>36</sup> Studies have largely dealt with Western societies. Ransom and Wright, "Constructing Culinary Knowledge"; Elizabeth Driver, "Cookbooks as Primary Sources for Writing History: A Biographer's View," *Culture & Society*, 12:3 (2009), 270; Literature scholar Anne L. Bower's work brings together a collection of essays that illuminate the way community cookbooks convey and construct ideologies and identities, Anne L. Bower, *Recipes for Reading*.

<sup>37</sup> Donna Lee Brien and Adele Wessel, eds., *TEXT* 24 (2013); See also Donna Lee Brien, "A Taste of Singapore: Singapore Food writing and Culinary Tourism," *MC Journal* 17.1 (2014); Donna Lee Brien, "'Concern and Sympathy in a Pyrex bowl': Cookbooks and Funeral Foods," *Media-Culture Journal*, 16.3 (2013), 7; Donna Lee Brien and Rachel Franks, "Take the Most Tender Part of the Kangaroo: Locating Archival and Other Food Studies Resources in Australian Public Collections," *Australasian Journal of Popular Culture* 2.1 (2013), 107-25.

<sup>38</sup> Henry Notaker, *The History of Cookbooks: From Kitchen to Page over Seven Centuries* (Oakland: University of California, 2017); See also, Henry Notaker, *Printed Cookbooks in Europe, 1470-1700: A Bibliography of Early Modern Culinary Literature* (New Castle: Oak Knoll Press, 2010).

<sup>39</sup> Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Basic Books, 1984); and *Censors at Work: How States Shaped Literature* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton. 2014); Ted Striphas, *The Late Age of Print: Everyday Book Culture from Consumerism to Control* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

helped establish markets and demands for commodities, including curry.<sup>40</sup> As a site for public forums, newspapers united large communities of readers, “connected through a shared imaginary world, as represented in that newspaper.”<sup>41</sup> Print culture rapidly expanded during the 1890s. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, communication media diversified into radio and television.<sup>42</sup> Curry made appearances in the advertisements, articles and recipes of Australian newspapers, which form the core of source material in the first chapter.<sup>43</sup>

Advertising provides a rich source for historical analysis. Scholars have debated the role of advertising; divided as to the extent it is a reflection, or an agent, of societies. Advertisements are, as historian Jackson Lears has argued, “more than static symbols” that “sanction or subvert existing structures of economic and political power”.<sup>44</sup> The study of material culture frequently intersects with the study of advertising. Appadurai has examined how material items are “socially regulated”, arguing that “commodities represent very complex social forms and distributions of knowledge”.<sup>45</sup> Advertisements are ultimately intended to sell commodities or ideas, and, while only one of many cultural influences, these signs have the ability to reveal the ideologies of those who designed them, and suggest the preoccupations and ideals of their social contexts.

Much of the scholarly work on advertising has focused on the United States of America.<sup>46</sup> Lears’ 1994 work situated the rise of American advertising within broader

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<sup>40</sup> They were “part of an imperial cultural space”, Martyn Lyons, “Britain’s Largest Export Market,” in John Arnold and Martyn Lyons, eds., *A History of the Book in Australia 1891-1945: A National Culture in a Colonised Market* (St Lucia, Qld: University of Queensland Press, 2001), 22; With “almost universal literacy by the 1880s”, newspaper readerships extended through class divides, Deana Heath, “Literary Censorship, Imperialism and the White Australia Policy,” in John Arnold and Martyn Lyons, eds., *A History of the Book in Australia 1891-1945: A National Culture in a Colonised Market* (St Lucia, Qld: University of Queensland Press, 2001), 72. (69-82); Henry Mayer, *The Press in Australia* (Melbourne: Lansdowne Press, 1964), 16; John Arnold, “Newspapers and Daily Reading,” in John Arnold and Martyn Lyons, eds., *A History of the Book in Australia 1891-1945: A National Culture in a Colonised Market* (St Lucia, Qld: University of Queensland Press, 2001), 255.

<sup>41</sup> Ann Curthoys, “Histories of Journalism,” in Ann Curthoys and Julianne Schultz, eds., *Journalism: Print, Politics and Popular Culture* (St. Lucia, Qld: University of Queensland Press, 1999), 1.

<sup>42</sup> Colin Bannerman, “Print Media and the Development of an Australian Culture of Food and Eating c. 1850 to c. 1920: The evidence from Newspapers, Periodic Journals and Cookery Literature,” PhD diss., University of Canberra: 2001), 10, 47.

<sup>43</sup> Australian newspapers have been accessed through Trove (most useful until 1954), and various other databases. The most useful database for 1954-2000 was *Newsbank*, which holds titles such as the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

<sup>44</sup> Jackson Lears, *Fables Of Abundance: A Cultural History Of Advertising In America* (New York: Basic Books, 1994), 1-2.

<sup>45</sup> Arjun Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 17, 41.

<sup>46</sup> This can be understood as a reflection of the nation’s historic and contemporary focus on capitalist consumerism.

international cultural currents.<sup>47</sup> Historian Kristin L. Hoganson utilised advertising to explore the American “imperial system of consumption”, and how foreign ingredients were incorporated into American culture.<sup>48</sup> Feminist scholar Anne McClintock has importantly examined the intersection of racism and the imperial contest in relation to advertising in Victorian Britain. The relationship between chocolate advertising, colonialism and race in Germany has been examined by scholar Silke Hackenesch.<sup>49</sup> The latter works, like my own, are concerned with how goods are advertised in an imperial system. The intersection of advertising and gender roles has received a good deal of attention, notably in relation to food advertising.<sup>50</sup>

In the context of Australia, Susie Khamis has studied depictions of class in Bushells’s Tea promotions, and food brands are among advertisers examined by political scientist Jillian Prideaux.<sup>51</sup> Nutrition scholar Danielle Gallegos has used food advertising in the *AWW* to argue that the shift away from a White Australia policy to a more multicultural society corresponded with a more diverse Australian diet.<sup>52</sup> Also utilising the *AWW*, Susan Sheridan examined how representations of food communicated cultural difference during the 1960s.<sup>53</sup> This study builds on these themes, through a case study of the Keen’s Curry brand, and demonstrates advertising both reflects society and shapes tastes, and thus culture.

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<sup>47</sup> Juliann Sivulka is also prominent, Juliann Sivulka, *Soap, Sex, and Cigarettes: A Cultural History of American Advertising* (Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1998).

<sup>48</sup> Kristin L. Hoganson, *Consumers’ Imperium: The Global Production of American Domesticity, 1865-1920* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 11.

<sup>49</sup> Silke Hackenesch, “Advertising Chocolate, Consuming Race? On the Peculiar Relationship of Chocolate Advertising, German Colonialism, and Blackness,” *Food & History* 12.1 (2014), 97-112.

<sup>50</sup> Historian Katherine J Parkin, examined how the purchase and production of food in advertorial depiction is constructed as women demonstrating love, Katherine J Parkin, *Food Is Love: Food Advertising and Gender Roles in Modern America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); Historian Jessamyn Neuhaus critically asserted that advertising has not changed as much as could be expected, given the social and political developments of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Jessamyn Neuhaus, *Housework and Housewives in Modern American Advertising: Married to the Mop* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

<sup>51</sup> Susie Khamis, “Bushells and the Cultural Logic of Branding,” PhD diss., Macquarie University, 2007; Khamis, “Class in a Tea Cup”, 13-26; Jillian Prideaux, “Consuming Icons: Nationalism and Advertising in Australia,” *Nations and Nationalism* 15.4 (2009), 616-35.

<sup>52</sup> Danielle Gallegos, “Pastes, Powders and Potions: the Development of an Eclectic Australian Palate,” *Journal for the Study of Food and Society* 4.2 (2000), 39-46. See also Robert Crawford, “Selling or Buying American Dreams?: Americanization and Australia's Interwar Advertising Industry,” *Comparative American Studies An International Journal*, 3.2 (2005), 213-236; Robert Crawford, “Nothing to Sell?—Australia's Advertising Industry at War, 1939–1945,” *War & Society*, 20.1 (2002), 99-124.

<sup>53</sup> Sheridan, “Eating the Other”, 319-29.

Food history in Australia has largely been concerned with defining a national cuisine, reflecting questions of identity and the search for a historical metanarrative.<sup>54</sup> Debate has presented binaries of pride and embarrassment; “bland” and “exciting”.<sup>55</sup> Engagement, or lack thereof, with indigenous foods has been explored.<sup>56</sup> Food production has received attention, and scholars have sought to make sense of the “historical narrative of increasing sophistication” in Australian cuisine.<sup>57</sup> There is also a growing body of work looking at cookbooks.<sup>58</sup> Intersections of food with class, race and gender, although studied by some, are deserving of more attention. This study of curry helps to do this.<sup>59</sup>

Curry has received a substantial amount of attention from scholars, reflecting its importance as a lens to examine colonialism, empire, culture and identity, and their entanglement with the everyday. Appadurai deemed curry the “master trope” of colonialism, and Bickham has used it, with commodities such as tea and sugar, to assert the “empire’s pervasive presence in Briton’s lives”.<sup>60</sup> Bickham concluded curry offered a way to “replicate

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<sup>54</sup> One of the earliest scholarly works was: Anne Gollan, *The Tradition of Australian Cooking* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1978).

<sup>55</sup> In 1982, Michael Symons contentiously argued that the lack of a peasant society meant Australian gastronomy was detached from its environment, and thus lacking, Michael Symons, *One Continuous Picnic: A History of Eating in Australia* (Adelaide: Duck Press, 1982); In a similar vein, Richard Beckett asserted Australia’s disinterest in fine dining was a result of the penal origins of European settlement, Richard Beckett, *Convicted Tastes: Food in Australia* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1984); A substantial body of work continues to counter such claims. See for example, Colin Bannerman, *Acquired Tastes: Celebrating Australia’s Culinary History* (Canberra: National Library of Australian, 1998); Barbara Santich, *Bold Palates: Australia’s Gastronomic Heritage* (Kent Town: Wakefield Press, 2012); Charmaine O’Brien, *The Colonial Kitchen: Australia 1788-1901* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016).

<sup>56</sup> See for example, O’Brien, *The Colonial Kitchen*; Barbara Santich, “Nineteenth-Century Experimentation and the Role of Indigenous Foods in Australian Food Culture,” *Australian Humanities Review* 51 (2011), 65-78; Blake Singley, “Hardly Anything Fit for Man to Eat’: Food and Colonialism in Australia,” *History Australia*, 9.3 (2012), 27-42.

<sup>57</sup> Tanja Luckins, “Historiographic Foodways: A Survey of Food and Drink in Australia,” *History Compass* 11.8 (2013), 553; Food production: Keith Farrer, *To Feed a Nation: A History of Australian Food Science and Technology* (Collingwood: CSIRO Publishing, 2005); Andrea Gaynor, *Harvest of the Suburbs: An Environmental History of Growing Food in Australian Cities* (Perth: University of Western Australia, 2006); Increased sophistication: Donna Lee Brien, “More than Just a Good Nosh Up: Women and Australian Food Writing,” *Text* 12.1 (2008); Tanja Luckins, “Competing for Cultural Honours: Cosmopolitanism, Food, Drink and the 1956 Olympics, Melbourne,” in Diane Kirkby and Tanja Luckins, eds., *Dining on Turtles: Food Feasts and Drinking in History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

<sup>58</sup> See for example, Bette R. Austin, *A Bibliography of Australian Cookery Books Published Prior to 1941* (Melbourne: RMIT, 1987); Donna Lee Brien and Adele Wessell, eds., “Cookbooks: Writing, Reading and Publishing Culinary Literature in Australasia,” *Text* 24 (2013); Blake Singley, *Recipes for a Nation: Cookbooks and Australian Culture to 1939*, PhD diss., Australian National University, 2013.

<sup>59</sup> Judy Smart, “Feminists, Food and the Fair Price: The Cost of Living Demonstrations in Melbourne, August-September 1917,” *Labour History* 50 (1986), 113-131; Tim Rowse, *White Flour, White Power: From Rations to Citizenship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

<sup>60</sup> Appadurai, “How to Make a National Cuisine”, 18; Bickham, “Eating the Empire”, 73.



and celebrate the imperial experience”, and that such products enabled the empire to prosper through the consumption of these “little luxuries”.<sup>61</sup>

The perspectives of Procida and Leong-Salobir, detailed at the start of this chapter, contrast sharply with scholars who have argued that foods were used by Anglo-Indians to signify and perform difference from the colonised. Despite shunning curry in the colonial context, historian Nupur Chaudhuri asserts British women were “agents of cultural exchange”, instrumental in creating awareness, understandings, and desire for curry in Britain.<sup>62</sup> Literature scholar Susan Zlotnick built on Chaudhuri’s ideas, proposing that domestic British women were “moral” agents. By naturalising Indian food, they performed the ideological work of empire, “domesticated imperialism”, through “taking the Other [curry] and making it self”.<sup>63</sup>

Cultural studies scholar Stephanie R. Maroney, focusing on the 18<sup>th</sup> century, argued that the meaning of curry was continuously changing and built upon, dependant on its place of consumption.<sup>64</sup> Examining returned East India Company men (“nabobs”), historian Tillman W. Nechtman suggested material symbols such as curry figured prominently in discomforting domestic Britons with their “hybrid identity”, suggesting the “boundary between nation and empire...was permeable”.<sup>65</sup>

Curry is international and scholars have conceptualised it as such. Historian David Burton used curry and couscous to compare the British and French adoption of the food cultures of their colonial conquests.<sup>66</sup> Historian Lauren Janes suggested French domestic attitudes in the interwar period towards foods derived from colonial conquests (curry among these), and a rejection of them as foreign, reflected broader ideas of empire.<sup>67</sup> A compendium of essays edited by Krishnendu Ray and Tulasi Srinivas examined globalisation and the impact of South

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<sup>61</sup> Troy Bickham, “Eating the Empire: Intersections of Food, Cookery and Imperialism in Eighteenth-Century Britain,” *Past and Present*, 198 (2008), 87-8, 107, 109.

<sup>62</sup> Nupur Chaudhuri “Shawls, Jewelry, Curry and Rice in Victorian Britain,” in Nupur Chaudhuri and Margaret Strobel, eds., *Western Women and Imperialism: Complicity and Resistance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 231-46.

<sup>63</sup> Susan Zlotnick, “Domesticating Imperialism: Curry and Cookbooks in Victorian England,” *Frontiers: A Journal of Women’s Studies* 16.2-3 (1996), 52, 54, 65.

<sup>64</sup> Stephanie R. Maroney, “To Make Curry the Indian Way: Tracking the Meaning of Curry Across Eighteenth Century Communities,” *Food and Foodways* 19.1-2 (2011), 122.

<sup>65</sup> Tillman W. Nechtman, “Nabobs Revisited: A Cultural History of British Imperialism and the Indian Question in Late-Eighteenth-Century Britain,” *History Compass* 4.4 (2006), 645.

<sup>66</sup> David Burton, “Curries and Couscous: Contrasting Colonial Legacies in French and British Cooking,” in A. Lynn Martin and Barbara Santich, eds., *Gastronomic Encounters* (Brompton, South Australia: East Street Publications, 2004), 49-61.

<sup>67</sup> Lauren Janes, *Colonial Food in Interwar Paris: The Taste of Empire* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 116-20.

Asian gastronomy on the world.<sup>68</sup> Britain and 19<sup>th</sup> century Canada are the site's of Shrabani Basu's and Mary F. Williamson's respective studies of curry, tracing the rise, and in the latter case, fall, in popularity of the dish.<sup>69</sup> Curry has been examined by Nicole Tarulevicz as a Singaporean food, symbolic of the nation's hybridised cuisine.<sup>70</sup>

Curry in an Australian context has received comparatively little attention and our story both shares some commonality with what we know of curry in the British Empire, and is unique in its development in local conditions. Historian Adele Wessell used curry to argue that food is "located within and across cultural boundaries, through networks of connections and disconnections."<sup>71</sup> The most substantial work on curry in Australia, by historian Ian Simpson, asserts the "changing identity" of curry by examining "Australian Constructions of Indian Food".<sup>72</sup> My study shares Simpson's understanding that curry has generated varying meanings in Australian history, but shows that these understandings were complex and early; and although seemingly contradictory, often existed simultaneously. Turning to the arrival of curry in Australia, the foodstuff landed in Sydney with relatively little fanfare.

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<sup>68</sup> Krishnendu Ray and Tulasi Srinivas, *Curried Cultures: Globalization, Food, and South Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012); See also, Sami Zubaida, "The Idea of "Indian Food": Between the Local and the Global," *Food and History* 7.1 (2009), 191-210.

<sup>69</sup> Shrabani Basu, *Curry: The Story of the Nation's Favourite Dish* (Stroud: Sutton, 2003); Williamson, Mary F. "Curry: A Pioneer Canadian Dish," *Multiculturalism* 11.3 (1979), 21-4.

<sup>70</sup> Nicole Tarulevicz, *Eating Her Curries and Kway: A Cultural History of Food in Singapore* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2013), 77-115.

<sup>71</sup> Wessell, "There's No Taste like Home", 811-21; Other Australian scholars include, Beverley Kingston, "A Taste of India," *Australian Cultural History* 9 (1990), 36-48; Jacqui Newling, *Eat Your History: Stories and Recipes from Australian Kitchens* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2016), and "Currying Favour on Australia's Tables: The Transformation of an Imperial Staple," *History: Magazine of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 132 (2017), 16-17. Bannerman, *Print Media*.

<sup>72</sup> Ian Simpson, "The Many Meanings of Curry: Australian Constructions of Indian Food," *Locale: The Australasian-Pacific Journal of Regional Food Studies* 5 (2015), 102-24.

# “Many People are Fond of Curry”: Key Moments in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Australia

Early in 19<sup>th</sup> century, curry arrived in the Australian colonies, rapidly establishing its place in an emerging culinary culture. The structure of this chapter is temporal, first examining advertisements for curry that illustrate flows of commodities, people, and ideas across the empire and globe. Turning to the presence of curry at the 1866 Melbourne Intercolonial Exhibition, its depiction and suggested uses in colonial cookbooks and other print media, it is argued that curry was conceptualised as at once ordinary yet exotic. From meanings generated by curry, the negotiation of identity in 19<sup>th</sup> century Australia is demonstrated.

## Curry, Trade and Empire

As early as 1806, the *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* reported the auction by a Mr. Bevan, on behalf of a “gentleman designing to leave the colony” of “Gravy, Curry and Dessert dishes”.<sup>1</sup> Although it is the vessel, rather than the foodstuff that was advertised, this suggests that curry was familiar to the newspaper’s readership. Reinforcing the idea that curry was known, are the types of dishes it appears alongside, namely gravy and dessert, unspecific but common fare in the British diet.<sup>2</sup>

Curry powder was the dominant means by which Australians, in both the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, prepared curry. In December 1813, the arrival of the spice blend was announced:

CURRY POWDER. - A few Cannisters of lately imported CURRY POWDER, in high preservation, on Sale by J. Laurie, 18, Hunter-street, Price 1l. 5s. per Cannister, with directions for use; where may also be had the following spices; vis. NUTMEGS, CLOVES, CINNAMON, AND GINGER.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* 20 July 1806, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Curry dishes were advertised in the *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* over the next two decades. See for example: *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* 20 October 1810, 4; 10 November 1810, 1; 8 December 1810, 2; “Curry dishes and covers”, 20 July 1811, 2; 2 Oct 1813, 2; 25 December 1813, 2; 22 January 1820, 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* 4 December 1813, 2. Jacqui Newling has observed an earlier reference to curry, served in 1810 at the Government House in Sydney. Jacqui Newling, “Currying Favour on

Advertisements during this period tend to list an array of goods, from the edible to furniture and clothing, with little, if any differentiation. Curry led the notice, signalling its importance. It is also specified that each canister came with instructions for use, suggesting that while curry was known, many may not have cooked or tried the dish. Curry powder became a regular feature of 19<sup>th</sup> century advertisements, evidentially a selling point.<sup>4</sup>

**ON SALE, at PARR'S, opposite the Lumber-yard,  
hyson, hyson skin, best souchong, and imperial  
teas, by the chest or caddy, sugar candy, loaf and  
best moist sugar, by the bag or ton, coffee, cocoa, and  
chocolate, English hams and cheese, sauces of sorts,  
mustard, capers, olive oil, olives, curry powder, white  
wine vinegar, English bottled gooseberries, raisins, nut-  
megs, allspice, cloves, mace, cinnamon, ginger, pepper,  
essence of spruce, quart and pint decanters, goblets,  
tumblers, wine glasses, cruets, salts, finger cups, elegant  
English sets of blue and fancy dinner services, tea ser-  
vices of China with gilt edges, &c. blue cups and**

Figure 2. "Parr's 1821"<sup>5</sup>

Curry powder was positioned alongside other imported commodities (see figure 2), revealing connections to global trade networks of empire and the range of foods available.<sup>6</sup> The origins of goods, often included, appear to have stood in for brand names, as a signifier of worth and potential quality. By November 1821, the range of imported edibles had increased significantly. Tea came from China, sugar from Bengal or the Caribbean, coffee, cocoa from the tropical Americas, ham, cheese, and gooseberries from Britain itself, capers, olives, and raisins from Gibraltar or the Ionian Islands, curry powder and spices from India, perhaps blended by merchants in England.<sup>7</sup> The empire had well and truly arrived in

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Australia's Tables: The Transformation of an Imperial Staple," *History: Magazine of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 132 (2017), 16.

<sup>4</sup> Other spices appear often, but always separately to, curry powder. As such, it was a value added product, elevated to a higher standing.

<sup>5</sup> *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* 10 November 1821, 2.

<sup>6</sup> The Australian colonies remained dependant on imported goods for many years, Colin Bannerman "Print Media and the Development of an Australian Culture of Food and Eating c. 1850 to c. 1920: The evidence from Newspapers, Periodic Journals and Cookery Literature," PhD diss., (University of Canberra, 2001), 297.

<sup>7</sup> Felipe Fernandez- Armesto, *Near A Thousand Tables: A History of Food* (New York: The Free Press, 2002), 182-3; Kenneth F. Kiple, *A Moveable Feast: Ten Millennia of Food Globalization* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 214-25.

Australia. As Kristin L. Hoganson reminds, “kitchens had become places of global encounter. Though symbols of domesticity, kitchens were far from being thoroughly domestic...[rather] the cutting edge of globalisation.”<sup>8</sup>

The flow of goods was not a straightforward transaction between a colony and Britain, but a complex series of exchanges in which raw ingredients could be harvested, transported, processed, and transported several more times before being sold to a final consumer. The networks that brought curry powder to Australia had, by this time, “created a new set of relationships which changed what was grown, made and consumed in each part of the world.”<sup>9</sup> Historian Tony Ballantyne has argued for the replacement of a “metrocentric” conception of imperial history, with a more nuanced understanding of the “webs of empire”, or “a complex system of overlapping and interwoven institutions, organizations, ideologies, and discourses”, in order to reflect such flows.<sup>10</sup> Human geographer Alan Lester supports this conceptual shift, suggesting the metropole and colonial centres such as Hobart, Sydney and Calcutta, were “nodes”, “knitted together within a global cultural and political framework”.<sup>11</sup>

Curry demonstrates the ways ideas, as well as goods, people and capital travelled the imperial webs, being “made and remade” in each node, according to the site’s “own possibilities and conditions of knowledge”.<sup>12</sup> Troy Bickham pointed out the “incontestable” relationship between food and empire, with exotic luxuries such as sugar, tea and coffee, fuelling imperial expansion, and gradually becoming “perceived necessities” in European societies. Many foods of empire were “ubiquitous” and almost “universally available” across geography, class and gender in eighteenth century Britain. The accessibility of foreign foodstuffs such as curry powder can increasingly be applied to the nineteenth century Australian colonies, demonstrating the “pervasive presence of empire” in everyday lives.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Kristin L. Hoganson, *Consumers’ Imperium: The Global Production of American Domesticity, 1865-1920* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 110-1.

<sup>9</sup> Miles Ogborn, “Historical Geographies of Globalisation, c. 1500-1800,” in Brian Graham and Catherine Nash, eds., *Modern Historical Geographies* (London: Pearson Longman, 2000), 43-69.

<sup>10</sup> Tony Ballantyne, “Rereading the Archive and Opening up the Nation-State: Colonial Knowledge in South Asia (and Beyond),” in Antoinette Burton, ed., *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking with and through the Nation* (London, Duke University Press, 2003), 104, 113.

<sup>11</sup> Alan Lester, *Imperial Networks: Creating Identities in Nineteenth-Century South Africa and Britain* (London: Routledge, 2001), 5.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 5; Lester drew on Edward Said, (1993) *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Vintage, 1994), 60.

<sup>13</sup> Troy Bickham, “Eating the Empire: Intersections of Food, Cookery and Imperialism in Eighteenth-Century Britain,” *Past and Present*, 198 (2008), 71-3.

Advertisements also suggest varied and complex Australian food habits. As scholars such as Barbara Santich and Colin Bannerman have asserted, the popular conception of the colonial Australian diet being a monotonous and dull replication of the British diet, is undermined by such sources.<sup>14</sup> While it is difficult to assess exactly who consumed goods such as curry, the fact that they continued to be promoted suggests they were sought after items. Nicole Humble has argued that curry in Britain remained “the food of the prosperous” until the mid-twentieth century.<sup>15</sup> This was not the case in Australia, where curry cut across class differences. This will become evident as the thesis unfolds. Archaeologist Susan Lawrence’s study of the 1830s and 1840s foodways in two Tasmanian whaling stations, utilising archaeological and historical evidence, shows that sauces, pickles (such as capers), and spices complemented basic rations of meat and bread. If working-class men on the very margins of colonies ate a variety of condiments, it seems likely that these foods were not only available and consumed by elites, but by the urban working-class too.

The emergence of curry powders and pastes signified a definitive leap in British appropriation of Indian food. British merchants first produced it in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century to meet an increased taste and demand for Indian foods in the metropole. Manufactured in both India and Britain, the ingredients of the spice blends varied significantly.<sup>16</sup> An idea of what a common curry powder would have contained can be ascertained from cookbooks of the era.<sup>17</sup> For Edward Abbott, author of Australia’s first cookbook, 1864’s *The English and Australian Cookery Book*, curry powder was unquestionably of Indian origin, with “Indian Servants”

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<sup>14</sup> Barbara Santich, *Bold Palates: Australia’s Gastronomic Heritage* (Kent Town: Wakefield Press, 2012); Colin Bannerman, *Acquired Tastes: Celebrating Australia’s Culinary History* (Canberra: National Library of Australian, 1998).

<sup>15</sup> Curry, “no longer contain[ed] even a whiff of exoticism” by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Britain, Nicola Humble, *Culinary Pleasures: Cook Books and the Transformation of British Food* (London: Faber and Faber, 2005), 24.

<sup>16</sup> Bickham cited the earliest record of curry powder being purchased from 1775, and 1784 as the date of the first advertisement for curry powder, “Eating the Empire”, 105; Tillman W. Nechtman significantly noted an earlier (1773) advertisement for curry paste, “Nabobs Revisited: A Cultural History of British Imperialism and the Indian Question in Late-Eighteenth-Century Britain,” *History Compass* 4.4 (2006), 655.

<sup>17</sup> Two of the most influential British (also influential in Australia) cookbooks of the century by Eliza Acton and Isabella Beeton, included recipes for curry powder, Adele Wessell, “Cookbooks for Making History: As Sources for Historians and as Records of the Past,” *Media-Culture* 16.3 (2013); Acton’s recipe was a simple, savoury mix, with turmeric, coriander, cumin, fenugreek, and cayenne (chilli). Although “exceedingly agreeable and aromatic”, it was “troublesome” to make, and could be replaced with one from a “high-caste” chemist. Beeton concurred, asserting that shop-bought curry powder was “far superior”. Her recipe included coriander, turmeric, cinnamon, fenugreek, ginger, mustard, cayenne and allspice, producing a more complex and far sweeter blend. Eliza Acton, *Modern Cookery in all its Branches: Reduced to a System of Easy Practice, for the Use of Private Families*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1845), 286-94; Isabella Beeton, *Beeton’s Book of Household Management* (London: S. O. Beeton, 1861).

manufacturing the “curry stuff”, that was “in daily use at every meal in the East”.<sup>18</sup> The ingredients and blending of spices varied, as “[t]hey invariably make it as they want it, from the best ingredients”.<sup>19</sup> Warning of the “invariable adulteration” of shop-brought powders, Abbott’s recipe for the “Indian condiment of a very wholesome and agreeable kind”, blended mustard seed, coriander seed, turmeric, black pepper, cayenne, cinnamon, cloves, and mace.<sup>20</sup>

The ingredients of curry powder further reinforces the connected nature of empire, pointing to earlier trade networks. Cayenne, a type of chilli, was introduced by the Portuguese to India from Central and South America in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Cloves and mace are indigenous to Indonesia. Other spices were circulated across the Eurasian continent, sometimes for thousands of years. Arab traders introduced fenugreek to India. Cumin and coriander originated in the Middle East, and have been used in India and China for several thousand years. Mustard was indigenous to Europe, with the Romans distributing it widely.<sup>21</sup> The varied origins of these spices locate Australia within a broader history of culinary globalisation, and an extensive history of long distance trade networks.

## People, Curry and Empire

The flows of empire brought people, as well as commodities and ideas. Many Anglo-Indians, with Indian servants, chose to migrate to Australia rather than return to Britain, seeing greater opportunity and a milder climate.<sup>22</sup> With them, they brought a taste for Indian, or Anglo-Indian food, most specifically curry. An ongoing conversation encouraging this immigration was initiated. The *Australian* published advice concerning “[e]migration” between “India and New South Wales” in 1828. The answer to “what is necessary for a family to bring with them?”,

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<sup>18</sup> Edward Abbott, *The English and Australian Cookery Book: For the Many, as well as the “Upper Ten Thousand”* (London: Sampson, Low, Son, and Marston, 1864), 209, 42; A vast collection of recipes, quotations and ideas, the bulk of Abbott’s cookbook was compiled from a wide range of international sources, reinforcing the notion that ideas, as well as commodities and people, circulated through empire. Bannerman deems it “a bold attempt to cover all points of the culinary compass as it might have appeared to one standing in Australia in the 1860s”, Bannerman, *Print Media*, 84.

<sup>19</sup> Abbott, *The English and Australian Cookery Book*, 209.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 209-10; This concern with quality continued well into the twentieth century, evident in advertisements spruiking “pure” and “true” curry powders.

<sup>21</sup> Fernandez- Armesto, *Near A Thousand Tables*, 153, 155, 161-2, 165.

<sup>22</sup> Beverley Kingston, “A Taste of India.” *Australian Cultural History* 9 (1990), 39; Due to instability in the Indian economy, migration increased during the late 1820s and early 1830s, James Broadbent, Suzanne Rickard and Margaret Steven, *India, China, Australia: Trade and Society 1788-1850* (Sydney: Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, 2003), 19-20, 84.

was “[p]late, books, table and bed linen, rice and curry”.<sup>23</sup> The reply was not facetious, identifying curry as an essential.

Further evidence suggests curry was important to the identity of Anglo-Indians and not simply a necessity. In the words of Adele Wessell, “[c]onsuming food is an embodied, concrete, practical experience of the past. A dish invokes its own history... establish[ing] new relations of meaning between the subject and cultural, social locations.”<sup>24</sup> In 1829, Elizabeth Fenton participated in a Hobart picnic: “I was solicited by all parties to produce a curry as my part of the feast, which gave general satisfaction; Mrs Stephan declared it to be the nicest dish she had ever tasted”.<sup>25</sup> Anglo-Irish, Elizabeth married Captain Niel Campbell in 1826, and relocated to India. A year later Campbell died, and Elizabeth remarried to Captain Michael Fenton, with whom she emigrated to Van Diemen’s Land.<sup>26</sup> Curry was part of Elizabeth’s evolving identity, an element of her past to which she clung, and shared with those of her new home. Elizabeth’s journey reinforces the complex circulation of people, goods, and ideas through empire. Her continued consumption of curry indicates Anglo-Indians played a role in introducing and consolidating the place of curry in Australian culinary culture, and thus, that it was not necessarily a taste brought from the British “centre” of empire.<sup>27</sup> These tastes extended from curry powders to pastes.

Connections to India were important to the Australian colonies, particularly in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The arrival of curry paste from India, first to Hobart then Sydney, suggests Tasmania was not merely an isolated outpost of little imperial concern, but an important trading “node”, in the fabric of empire.<sup>28</sup> It was “both provincial and cosmopolitan”, an international trading port with a population from many diverse cultures.<sup>29</sup> “Meat and Fish curry paste” was advertised in the *Hobart Town Courier* in May 1831, over a year before paste

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<sup>23</sup> *Australian* 16 December 1828, 3.

<sup>24</sup> Adele Wessell, “There’s No Taste like Home: The Food of Empire,” in Kate Darian-Smith, *et. al.*, eds., *Exploring the British World: Identity, Cultural Production, Institutions* (Melbourne: RMIT Publishing, 2004), 815.

<sup>25</sup> Elizabeth Fenton, *Mrs Fenton’s Tasmanian Journal 1829-1830* (Adelaide: Sullivan’s Cove), 1986.

<sup>26</sup> Margaretta Pos, *Mrs Fenton’s Journey: India and Tasmania 1826- 1876* (North Hobart: Walleah Press, 2014), iii.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>28</sup> Or Van Diemen’s Land, as it was called then. Curry paste first appeared in Adelaide and Melbourne newspapers in 1846, *South Australian Register* 28 February 1846, 1; *Port Phillip Patriot and Morning Advertiser* 16 October 1846, 3.

<sup>29</sup> It was “an intercolonial society: of Australia, the East Indies, the West Indies, America...the Cape, and of India.” With Chinese and Indian labourers and sailors, American traders and whalers, Indigenous peoples, and occasional Maori convicts, Australian colonial cities were dynamic, and likely more multicultural than for much of the twentieth century, James Broadbent, Suzanne Rickard and Margaret Steven, *India, China, Australia: Trade and Society 1788-1850* (Sydney: Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, 2003), 19-20, 22, 32.



appeared in the Sydney press.<sup>30</sup> Goods were advertised under the name of the ship they arrived on, allowing consumers to gain information about their age and condition, via detailed “shipping intelligence” columns in newspapers.<sup>31</sup> Tracing the ship responsible for a delivery of curry paste, the Barque *Africaine*, illustrates complex 19<sup>th</sup> century trade routes, and Hobart’s status as an international port city.<sup>32</sup> Curry paste, despite promising beginnings, remained second to curry powder in Australia.<sup>33</sup>

## 1866 Intercolonial Exhibition

Curry powders were displayed at international exhibitions in the Australian colonies as early as 1866.<sup>34</sup> Exhibitions, expositions, and world fairs are noted sites that constructed and legitimised hegemony, selling discourses of progress, nation and empire.<sup>35</sup> Inherently connected to the rise of industrialisation and capitalism, these “symbolic universes” of “imagined communities” presented displays creating cohesive explanations of past, present

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<sup>30</sup> *Hobart Town Courier* 21<sup>st</sup> May 1831, 3. The differentiation between blends appropriate for meat and fish did not occur with curry powder until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Discernment signifies a degree of subtlety, an awareness that certain combinations of spices were more suited to particular meats; In October 1832, “Kirk & Son” of George Street, Sydney, advertised that they had recently received “a superb invoice of Indian Sauces, which will be found a perfect novelty in these Colonies”. And continued: “*Extract from Mr. Buckingham’s Oriental Herald...Mulligatawnies and Curries are much recommended by the faculty as a diet in warm climates, especially if taken with Rice, are the most exquisite dishes known, and at no distant period will become one of the National Dishes of England.*” The advertisement affirms curry pastes were new to the colonial market, and in order to sell products, the approval of British consumers was evoked, *Sydney Herald* 25 October 1832, 1.

<sup>31</sup> Bannerman, “Print Media,” 297-8.

<sup>32</sup> The *Africaine* arrived in Hobart on the 4 July 1835 after departing “the Isle of France” (Mauritius) on the 24 of May, *Colonial Times* 7 July 1835, 4; On the 23 of July the *Africaine* sailed for Sydney, *True Colonist* 24 July 1835, 136; Arriving less than two weeks later on the 4 of August, *Sydney Monitor* 5 August 1835, 2; Madras (Chennai) was the Barque’s next destination. It departed on the 15 of August 1835, *Sydney Gazette* 18 August 1835, 2; A year later, the Barque is observed by the *Sydney Herald* as being in St. Helena, bound for London, after travelling from Sydney via Singapore, *Sydney Herald* 15 August 1836, 2; Few ships had regular routes, with speculative cargoes, taking advantage of thriving markets and available goods, James Broadbent, Suzanne Rickard and Margaret Steven, *India, China, Australia: Trade and Society 1788-1850* (Sydney: Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, 2003), 42, 54.

<sup>33</sup> Very few recipes in cookbooks call for curry paste, and the number of returns for searches of “curry paste” (4, 789) on Trove, is substantially less than for “curry powder” (106, 262). (As searched on 21 September 2017).

<sup>34</sup> Intercolonial Exhibition 1866, “Official Catalogue.” 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Melbourne: Wilkie, Welch and Co., 1866), 18, 77.

<sup>35</sup> See for example Robert W. Rydell, *All the World’s a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1984); Paul Greenhalgh, *Fair World: A History of World’s Fairs and Expositions from London to Shanghai, 1851-2010* (Berkshire: Papadakis, 2011); Kate Darian-Smith and others, eds., *Seize the Day: Exhibitions, Australia and the World*, (Melbourne: Monash University, 2008); Petter Sholliers and Nelleke Teughels, eds., *A Taste of Progress : Food at International and World Exhibitions in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2015); London was host to the first of these expositions, with the Great Exhibition held in 1851, Greenhalgh, *Fair World: A History*, 15.

and future.<sup>36</sup> The 1866 Melbourne Intercolonial Exhibition was designed to promote Australian unity through “capitalism and race”, with the federation of the colonies expected to follow closely.<sup>37</sup> Historian Emily Harris argues that “representations of a colonial Other were fundamental to the formation of a white Australian national identity”.<sup>38</sup> For historian Nelleke Teughels, food displayed and consumed at such exhibitions presents opportunities to “explore questions of hybridity...shifting identities...how food culture, cultural heritage and national identity are constructed”<sup>39</sup>

That curry powder was exhibited in the 1866 displays of Tasmania and Victoria erodes neat delineations between a white Australia and “a colonial other”. It reinforces curry as a known, familiar and ordinary food. Here, it appeared to be absorbed into a developing Australian cuisine, yet at other times, it was strongly associated with colonial India. The presence of curry powder confirms the hybridity and fluidity of developing Australian national identities. While Keen’s was one of only two manufacturers of curry powder listed in 1866, the 1888-9 Melbourne Centennial International Exhibition’s catalogue listed six curry powder producers from Victoria alone.<sup>40</sup> A cookbook displayed there recommended McKenzie’s, an exhibited curry powder, by associating it with a colonial other: “prepared from an original native recipe”.<sup>41</sup> Cookbooks, like exhibitions, were part of the “cult of progress” that was a defining feature of the era, transforming the “art” of cooking into a “system”, and thus educating and bettering society.<sup>42</sup> Curry appeared in the first Australian cookery manual, published in 1864, and has continued to feature in comprehensive Australian cookbooks.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Nelleke Teughels, “Introduction,” in Peter Sholliers, and Nelleke Teughels, eds. *A Taste of Progress : Food at International and World Exhibitions in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2015), 1; Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckman, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Anchor Books, 1967), 92-108; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Verso, 1991).

<sup>37</sup> The 1866 Intercolonial exhibition predominately brought together the Australian colonies, but also featured exhibits from New Zealand, New Caledonia, Mauritius, and Batavia, Emily Harris, “Race and Australian National Identity at the 1866-7 Intercolonial Exhibition,” in Darien-Smith and others, eds., *Seize the Day: Exhibitions, Australia and the World* (Melbourne: Monash University ePress, 2008), 03.11.

<sup>38</sup> As evident in displays of Indigenous Australian culture at the 1866 exhibition, *ibid.*, 03.2.

<sup>39</sup> Nelleke Teughels, “Introduction”, 9.

<sup>40</sup> Keen’s was listed as “Keene’s”, and curry as “currie”, Intercolonial Exhibition 1866, “Official Catalogue.” 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Melbourne: Wilkie, Welch and Co., 1866), 77; The other curry manufacturer was Victorian Robert Lavers, who also advertised their “first-class prize medal” from the exhibition, *Argus* 30 March 1869, 8; These included a J. F. McKenzie & Co, an early edition of the ongoing McKenzie’s food brand, Melbourne Centennial International Exhibition 1888-1889, “Official Catalogue of the Exhibits,” (Melbourne: Mason, Firth & M’Cutcheon, 1888), 12.

<sup>41</sup> Margaret J. Pearson, *Australian Cookery: Recipes for the People* (Melbourne: Paragon Printers, 1894), 39.

<sup>42</sup> Briggs in Bannerman “Print Media,” 52, 73.

<sup>43</sup> Curry, in various forms, appeared in every comprehensive Australian cook book examined for this study.

## Curry and Australian Fare

Curry was used to absorb unfamiliar indigenous ingredients in colonial Australia, demonstrating the extent to which it was a common dish in a burgeoning Australian culinary repertoire. It was an “agent of transformation”: a method and flavour profile used to render the unfamiliar into the familiar, producing culturally acceptable dishes such as “curried wattlebirds”.<sup>44</sup> Colonial experimentation with indigenous food sources was mostly concerned with the meat of native Australian animals. For Tasmanian artist Louisa Anne Meredith, the unfamiliar ingredient was the crow. Having cooked and sampled a wide variety of Tasmanian fauna such as echidna, “mutton fish”, and native hen, it was the cooking of crows that perplexed her: “[s]ome persons like these birds when cooked; but, after exhausting all my culinary skill upon them in roasts, stews, curries, and pies, I have finally given them up as not cookable, or rather as not relishable when cooked.”<sup>45</sup> Meredith’s attempt at making crows palatable also indicates the associating of curry with tougher or poor quality meat.

By the time Australian cookbooks began to proliferate in the 1890s, several notable colonial cookbooks affirm the use of curry as a process of adopting indigenous ingredients.<sup>46</sup> In Wilhelmina Rawson’s 1878 cookbook, she suggested the substitution of native flora and fauna for more familiar but unavailable ingredients:

Many people are disgusted at the mere idea of eating the white wood grub which the blacks are so fond of. As a matter of fact, there is nothing nasty or disgusting in these soft white morsels, any more than there is in an oyster. It is all a matter of taste...I have never tried them in a curry, but feel sure they would be excellent.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss asserted “the cooked is the cultural transformation of the raw.” Claude Levi-Strauss, “Culinary triangle,” *New Society* 8.221 (1966), 937-40; Barbara Santich, “Nineteenth-Century Experimentation and the Role of Indigenous Foods in Australian Food Culture,” *Australian Humanities Review* 51 (2011), 73; “Curried Wattlebirds” appear in Pearson, *Australian Cookery*, 40.

<sup>45</sup> Louisa Anne Meredith, *My Home in Tasmania During a Residence of Nine Years* (London: John Murray, 1852), 297.

<sup>46</sup> Another early example comes from Hannah Maclurcan, a northern Queenslander and cookbook writer, produced recipes to suit local conditions. Utilising ingredients such as wonga pigeon, and beche-de-mere in the 1899 edition, Maclurcan’s currying placed less emphasis on the unfamiliar, but none-the-less adapted and incorporated local influences. Reflecting the site of its production, Townsville, oysters, prawns, and green bananas were abundant resources to be curried by Maclurcan, Hannah Maclurcan, *Mrs. Maclurcan’s Cookery Book: A Collection of Practical Recipes Specially Suited for Australia*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Melbourne: George Robertson and Company, 1899), 70, 118, 408.

<sup>47</sup> Rawson’s work contained four recipes using curry powder, Wilhelmina Rawson, (1878) *The Antipodean Cookery Book and Kitchen Companion* (Kenthurst: Kangaroo Press, 1985), 54.

Rawson's palate included a penchant for Australian reptiles, of which she knew "of nothing better than the tail part of a young iguana. Either cooked on the ashes or cut up and curried, it is as nice a dish as I would wish."<sup>48</sup> Rawson thus demonstrates how the familiar method and flavour profile, in this case of curry, could transform the challenging into the palatable.<sup>49</sup> Her promotion of native fauna also indicates a reluctance amongst colonists to consume such unfamiliar meats. As historian Blake Singley observed, this tension reflects the complex and often contradictory ambivalence most colonists felt towards the Australian environment and its indigenous inhabitants.<sup>50</sup>

Several individuals argued strongly for curry's place in an Australian cuisine, despite the colonies not yet being federated, proposing it as a suitable national dish. In 1874, writer Marcus Clarke irreverently derided Australian culinary habits in a Melbourne newspaper column.<sup>51</sup> The dominance of meat and the neglect of vegetables and local food sources was "criminal", he despaired. Instead, he proposed a "regenerated food system", more suited to antipodean conditions, and resting upon a foundation of curry. Perhaps the first in Australia to suggest the addition of pineapple to curry, Clarke wrote:

A curry of kid, mixed with three eggs, the white of a cocoanut scraped to a powder, two chilis, and half a dozen slices of pineapple, is, as Falstaff said of Dame Quickly- 'a thing to thank god on'. The small river crayfish are excellent material; while he who has never eaten a young wombat treated with coriander seeds, turmeric, green mango, and dry ginger, has not used his opportunities.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 54-55.

<sup>49</sup> Also significant example comes from *Mrs. Beeton's*: Under the title "Typical Australian Dishes", the 1880 edition of *Mrs. Beeton's Book of Household Management* included "Kangaroo Tail, Curried". Whether or not curried kangaroo tails was a common Australian dish is debatable, although it was available tinned in 1960s New Zealand. The inclusion, however, of a recipe for an indigenous Australian meat (unlikely available in Britain), cooked in a product of empire (curry) from a disparate place, further reinforces that flows of ideas circulated through empire, rather than simply from metropole to colony, Isabella Beeton, (1880) *Mrs. Beeton's Household Management: A Guide to Cookery in all Branches* (London: Ward, Lock & Co., 1907), 1583; Although indigenous ingredients made only infrequent appearances in 20<sup>th</sup> century cookbooks, some did continue this theme combining curry and Australian native meats. An example of this is the Flinders Island Country Women's Association, (1946) *Flinders Island Souvenir Cookery Book* (Ulverstone: Ulverstone Press, 196?). Here, locally abundant species such as crayfish, 10, and mutton birds, 12, are curried; See also, Deborah Buller-Murphy, *Lady Hackett's Household Guide* (Melbourne: Robertson & Mullens, 1940), "Curried Kangaroo Tail", 451.

<sup>50</sup> Blake Singley, "More than Just Recipes: Reading Colonial Life in the Works of Wilhelmina Rawson," *Text* 24 (2013), 5-6.

<sup>51</sup> Clarke, most famous for his novel *For the Term of His Natural Life*, was also concerned with culinary matters, writing widely on the topic. He asserted the "quality of a race of beings is determined by two things: food and climate", Marcus Clarke in Bannerman, *Print Media*, 112.

<sup>52</sup> Marcus Clarke, "Something to Eat," *Herald* 3 February 1874, 1.

However flippant Clarke may have been, he recognised the hybrid potential of curry, and the incorporation of indigenous ingredients (here river crayfish and wombat) through the conduit of curry, is again evident.

Another 19th century Australian culinary crusader, Philip E. Muskett, similarly recommended curry as the antidote to Australia's excessive meat consumption. Muskett's 1892 diatribe deplored the "extraordinary food habits at present in vogue" that meant "our people live in direct opposition to their...environment".<sup>53</sup> Earnest in tone, he hoped that "when this national dish is composed and formally approved of by the nation, let us devoutly trust that it will be a MACEDOINE of vegetables, or a vegetable curry, or some well-concocted salad".<sup>54</sup> Muskett's work can be understood as doing the work of nation building.<sup>55</sup>

The late 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed a rise in nationalism, accompanied by an expansion in Australian culinary literature.<sup>56</sup> The search for a national dish is a recurring theme in Australian history, reflecting a cultural complex, centred on the nation's brief European settler history. Food and cuisines, as noted, are markers of identity and national values.<sup>57</sup> Clarke and Muskett present explicit examples of the intersection of food and national culture. In both, ingredients challenging to local palates - indigenous meats and vegetables - were transformed by curry. Curry had a firm place in Australian culture, and was worthy of being considered part of Australian identity.

## **Familiar and Foreign**

By the latter decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Australian newspapers confirm a widespread fondness for curry.<sup>58</sup> "The Ladies Column" from an 1888 Victorian newspaper articulates several key tensions that characterise curry's presence in Australia, both then and into the 20<sup>th</sup> century:

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<sup>53</sup> Philip E. Muskett (1892) *The Art of Living in Australia: Together with Three Hundred Australian Cookery Recipes and Accessory Kitchen Information by Mrs. H. Wicken* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 2016), xvii.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 104.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, Muskett's opening dedication is addressed to "AUSTRALIA--ONE AND UNITED".

<sup>56</sup> Bannerman, *Print Media*, 57, 80.

<sup>57</sup> Megan J. Elias, *Food on the Page: Cookbooks and American Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), 4; Arjun Appadurai, "How to Make a National Cuisine: Cookbooks in Contemporary India," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 30.1 (1988): 22.

<sup>58</sup> See also for example: "Most people like curry, and of all methods of reheating meat currying is perhaps the most successful" *Warwick Examiner and Times* 13 June 1896, 2.

[M]any people are fond of curry...that popular Indian dish...The generality of curries served in Australia and England are simply badly cooked stews or hashes, and a finishing touch of discomfort is added (to those at any rate who have lived in the East) by placing the rice around the meat, fowl, &c., and then one hears the remark, "I do not like curry." It should rather be, "I have never tasted it."<sup>59</sup>

The excerpt showcases the complex, and contradictory, ways curry was thought about in Australia. Historian Adele Wessell posed the question:

Why may curry be considered 'ethnic' and a cup of tea 'English' [or here, Australian] raises an important question about why some origins are maintained and others ignored. The practice of identity that is entailed making such differentiations is a historical practice.<sup>60</sup>

Wessel's statement touches on a central concern of this work. That is, the meaning of curry in Australia was varied, changing and complex; simultaneously familiar and exotic. As evident in "The Ladies Column", despite the commonness of the dish ("many people are fond of curry..."),<sup>61</sup> it often continued to be viewed as a foreign food ("that popular Indian dish"). Commenting on the "authenticity" of curry in Australia, ("badly cooked stews or hashes"), the column asserted the superiority of the foodstuff in "the East", or at very least, cooked by those who had lived there. It is implied that Australian and British eaters should not presume to have the cultural knowledge necessary to judge what constituted a curry. Yet the recipes attached to the discussion, or the many others that appear in 19<sup>th</sup> century Australia, are not direct replications of an Anglo-Indian dish.<sup>62</sup> Curry in Australia thus became a hybrid dish, at once ordinary and exotic.

Hybridity is useful in describing the entangled networks of global connections that have shaped the world. As postcolonial theorist Homi K. Bhabha argued, hybridity articulates the moment when "the differences of cultures can no longer be identified...cultural differences are not simply *there* to be seen or appropriated".<sup>63</sup> Tillman W. Nectman takes Bhabha's point that "the process of imperialism resulted in hybrid cultures in the colonized world", and argues that

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<sup>59</sup> *The Prahran Telegraph* 3 Nov 1888, 5. The discomfort with rice is an ongoing theme in Australian history that deserves more attention than can be given here.

<sup>60</sup> Wessell, "The Food of Empire," 818.

<sup>61</sup> Colin Bannerman's analysis of Australian print media from 1850-1920 found curry was one of the dishes "most commonly included in cookery books", with 38 recipes in 17 of the 25 books examined, Bannerman, "Print Media", 366.

<sup>62</sup> This is most evident here in the inclusion of "a little chopped *sour* apple or gooseberries," ingredients likely designed to replace unavailable souring agents such as tamarind or green mango, *The Prahran Telegraph* 3 Nov 1888, 5.

<sup>63</sup> Homi K. Bhabha, (1994) *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 2004), 163.

“nabobs”, men who returned to Britain having made fortunes in India before the Raj, “turned the paradigm on its head” producing “a hybrid identity located at the very heart of empire, Britain itself.”<sup>64</sup> If we replace nabobs with curry, and add in other colonies such as Australia, the proposition stands, working to describe the complex way nodes of empire were in dialogue with one another, and peoples, ideas, capital, goods, and most importantly, curry, flowed through and across imperial networks.

Leong-Salobir has observed this process in curry becoming part of an Anglo-Indian cuisine, developed and consolidated in a process of collaboration, negotiation and compromise.<sup>65</sup> Historian Donna R. Gabaccia reminds us that, “[e]ating habits both symbolize and mark the boundaries of cultures”, but it should be added, also mark the liminal spaces where these delineations break down.<sup>66</sup> Jean Duruz used curry laksa to trace shifting identities, the “re-mapping of ‘Asian’ and ‘Australian’ belongings”, that “underwrite[] imagined connections of food, identity, ethnicity and place.”<sup>67</sup> Curry more broadly plays this role in Australian history, sometimes occupying the space of a commonplace Australian dish, sometimes Indian or Asian, but often, and more ambivalently, a bit of both. Tracing curry in Australian history, with its simultaneous meanings of ordinary and exotic, reinforces these ideas.<sup>68</sup>

Tea provides an interesting comparison to curry in examining the identity and meanings associated with particular foods. Like curry, tea was a commodity introduced to Britain during the 1600s. Tea quickly became a perceived necessity and an “icon of English domesticity” during the 19<sup>th</sup> century: the country’s “national beverage”, uniting citizens across boundaries such as class and gender.<sup>69</sup> Yet the association of British national values and identity with tea caused discomfort, given that the product (before 1839) was a foreign import from China. It

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<sup>64</sup> Tillman W. Nechtman, “Nabobs Revisited: A Cultural History of British Imperialism and the Indian Question in Late-Eighteenth-Century Britain,” *History Compass* 4.4 (2006), 256.

<sup>65</sup> Cecilia Leong-Salobir, *Food Culture in Colonial Asia: A Taste of Empire* (London: Routledge, 2011), 1-2.

<sup>66</sup> Donna R. Gabaccia, *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans* (London, Harvard University Press, 1998), 8.

<sup>67</sup> Jean Duruz, “From Malacca to Adelaide...: Fragments Toward a Biography of Cooking, Yearning and *Laksa*,” in Sidney C. H. Cheung and Tan Chee-Beng, eds., *Food and Foodways in Asia: Resource, Tradition and Cooking* (London: Routledge, 2007), 184, 196.

<sup>68</sup> Exotic, as discussed by Lauren Janes: “a way of thinking about the other that implies cultural distance and reflects power structures” and Bret Berliner, “escapist...about ideals and fantasies,” in Lauren Janes, *Colonial Food in Interwar Paris: The Taste of Empire* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 67.

<sup>69</sup> Julie E. Fromer, ““Deeply Indebted to the Tea-Plant”: Representations of English National Identity in Victorian Histories of Tea,” *Victorian Literature and Culture* 36.2 (2008), 531.

“threatened to collapse the distinctions upon which that national identity was formulated.”<sup>70</sup> A secure supply of Indian tea was established by mid-century, and tea was “thus symbolically within the conceptual boundaries of Great Britain itself.”<sup>71</sup> While the “potentially troubling exotic origins of the national beverage” were domesticated, British consumers preferred the familiar taste of Chinese teas (predominantly green) and had to be taught to like the “more tannic” black Indian produced tea.<sup>72</sup> A sustained marketing campaign by tea producers eventually succeeded in changing tastes by imbuing the public with anxieties over the adulteration of Chinese tea, and assuring them of the purity of Indian teas.<sup>73</sup>

This shift in preferences is also evident in Australia, with tea likewise absorbed into Australian national culture.<sup>74</sup> Chinese teas such as “Souchong” and “Hyson Skin” figure prominently in advertisements of the early Australian colonies.<sup>75</sup> By the 1890s advertisements heavily promoted tea from India and Ceylon, using language such as “pure” and “genuine”.<sup>76</sup> While both tea and curry are both absorbed into Australian culinary culture, tea is named as Australian, while curry is not. In Wessel’s language, it remains “ethnic”. In short, curry is not culturally absorbed in the same way as tea is. It is gustatorily absorbed, but has not been incorporated ‘invisibly’ into Australian culture.

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 532.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 532, 534, 535; See also Sarah Besky, *The Darjeeling Distinction: Labor and Justice on Fair Trade Tea Plantations in India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 3-6.

<sup>72</sup> Besky, *The Darjeeling Distinction*, 6.

<sup>73</sup> Fromer, “Deeply Indebted, 536-542.

<sup>74</sup> The shift took place several decades later in Australia, Susie Khamis, “A Taste for Tea: How Tea Travelled to (and through) Australian Culture,” *Australian Cultural History* 24 (2006), 57-79.

<sup>75</sup> Robin Walker and Dave Roberts, *From Scarcity to Surfeit: A History of Food and Nutrition in New South Wales* (Kensington, NSW: New South Wales University Press, 1988), 24-5; See for example, “ON SALE, at PARR’S, opposite the Lumber-yard, hyson, hyson skin, best souchong, and imperial teas, by the chest or caddy...” *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* 10 November 1821, 2.

<sup>76</sup> See for example, “Poison in the Cup! The Calcutta Tea Association’s Pure Indian Teas”, *Australasian Supplement* 12 May 1883, 9. Advertisements for Chinese teas continued to feature in Australian newspapers. Articles compare the products of the two regions, discussing quality and adulteration rates. See for example, “From time immemorial the Chinese have been in the habit of adulterating their teas”, *Mercury* 3 October 1862, 3; Also, *Launceston Examiner* 24 November 1882, 2; *Mercury* 28 November 1862, 2; Sugar, and later, milk, assisted in the process of shifting tastes. As late as 1884, 79 percent of tea imported into New South Wales was from China; by 1904, 84 percent came from India and Ceylon, Walker and Roberts, *Scarcity to Surfeit*, 24-5; Domestic brands such as “Swagman Blend”, “Pannikin Blend”, and “Billy Tea” emerge, consciously associating their products with the infamously over-sweetened billy tea of the nationalist myths of the bush, Susie Khamis, “Class in a Tea Cup: The Bushells Brand, 1895- 1920,” in Robert Crawford, Judith Smart and Kim Humphery, eds., *Consumer Australia: Historical Perspectives* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), 16; Australian (and New Zealand) tea consumption per capita at the turn of the century has been placed above that of Britain’s, Beverley Kingston, “A Taste of India,” *Australian Cultural History* 9 (1990), 44.



The simultaneous conceptualisation of curry as familiar yet foreign demonstrates how colonial Australians attempted to delineate identity. Despite its use in rendering indigenous ingredients acceptable, its established place in Australian cuisine, and its suggested suitability as a national dish, curry did not lose its exotic connotations. From curry's first appearance in 1813 until the close of the century, the foodstuff has been used to demonstrate the complex and multitudinous flows of people, goods, and ideas, on which the Australian colonies were built. The availability of a diverse array of imported foodstuffs, such as curry, points to a more exciting Australian food culture than is popularly conceived. Into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, cookbooks and other print media refined and codified the multifarious meanings of curry.

## “Unchanged in a Changing World”?: Key Moments in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Australia

Curry was common in cookery books and newspaper recipes in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Nearly all comprehensive cookbooks examined included several curry recipes.<sup>1</sup> At the very least, curry powder was used in a preserve like chutney, or as a “sprinkle” on “Hash on Toast”.<sup>2</sup> Most frequently, curry barely rated a second mention: it was known, accepted and widely eaten. Yet at other times, curry was discussed at length: what it was, what it was not, and how it should be served. Again temporal in structure, this chapter shows that the 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed an increasingly diverse array of ingredients in curry, and ways it was used.<sup>3</sup> The impacts on curry of significant historical forces, such as the World Wars, are examined. Curry meanings were conceptualised around recognisable, and overlapping, themes. Concerns around authenticity are understood as displays of cultural capital, yet suggest problematic images of India and Asia. Next, a trend of sweeter curries articulates a sweetening Australian palate, and lastly, a growing sophistication demonstrates the nation’s increasing interest in its neighbourhood. Across these themes, ideas of ordinary and exotic manifested to different degrees.

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<sup>1</sup> Comprehensive as opposed to themed cookbooks.

<sup>2</sup> The two cookbooks with the least amount of recipes for, or using, curry were very remarkably similar in content, suggesting a sharing of recipes. These were: the Dilston CWA’s *Dilston Cookery Book* (Launceston: Foot & Playsted, 1940), with “Green Tomato Pickle”, 46, and “Tomato Relish”, 49, both using curry. It also included one curry recipe for “Dutch Curry”, a Biryani-style rice dish, 55; The Armed Services Nurses’ Welfare Association of Tasmania’s *Austerity Cookery Book* (Launceston: Telegraph Printers, 1943), with “Hash on Toast”, 21, using a “pinch” of curry powder.

<sup>3</sup> The uses of curry were limitless. See for example, *Stowport Cookery Book of 500 Tested Recipes* 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Burnie, Tasmania: The Advocate Print, 1930), 16: “Any Kind of Curry-”, “With Chicken, fish, rabbit, sweetbread, veal cutlets, lamb, mutton or pork chops, lobster, eels, oysters, etc, observe the same rule.”; Vegetables became the subjects of currying more often. Tinned fish, eggs, mince, and pulses were curried. Curry was put in pies and sandwiches, made into kabobs or balls, croquettes and curried egg canapés, and garnished with gherkins; See for example: The Lady Victoria Buxton Girls’ Club, *The Kookaburra Cookery Book of Household Recipes and Hints* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Melbourne: W. A. Comeadow, circa 1940s); See also Hannah Maclurcan, *Mrs. Maclurcan’s Cookery Book: Special Tasmanian Edition* 16<sup>th</sup> ed. (Hobart: J Walch & Sons, 1920). There is little to suggest adaptation for Tasmanian conditions. Among many diverse recipes for curry is “Sydney Sandwiches” with cold chicken, ham, white sauce and curry powder (179), underlining the idea that curry had strong local associations; One of the more puzzling recipes from 1935 curried cucumber with an egg, saffron and ham or corned beef in a pint of milk, *Gundagai Independent* 16 May 1935, 3.

# CURRY

Curry is an appetising winter dish, often, alas, regarded merely as a means of using up cold meat. By taking the necessary trouble, however, you may make curries to be proud of—yet it is perhaps not advisable to serve a curry to those who have lived in the East. They have an irritating way of remembering “curry tiffins,” and no matter how good your dish may be they refuse to recognise it as even a second cousin to the intriguing mixtures of India and Malaya.

## Dry Curry

2oz butter, 1lb veal, 1 tomato,  $\frac{1}{2}$  pint stock, 1 teaspoon chutney, 1 tablespoon curry powder, 1 banana, salt, pepper, 1oz sultanas, 1 apple, 1 teaspoon grated orange rind.

CUT the veal into half-inch pieces, fry in the boiling butter. When fried all round, add the finely chopped apple and onion and fry together 15 minutes. Add curry powder, grated rind, sliced tomato, banana, sultana, chutney, and salt; stir well together, add stock; cook very slowly, stirring often, until meat is dry; put on a hot dish and garnish with well boiled rice, thin slices lemon, and yolk of a hard-boiled egg rubbed through a sieve over rice.

## Curried Eggs and Bananas

Quantity of curry sauce (recipe below), 1 tart apple, 3 hard-boiled eggs, 3 bananas, rice.

ADD the finely diced apple to the curry sauce, allow to simmer gently until the apple is soft. Cut the bananas in three pieces diagonally, saute in butter

until a light brown, sprinkle with coconut. Cut the eggs in two lengthwise, reheat in the sauce. Pile in the centre of a hot dish. Place the prepared bananas on top of curry and serve with a border of rice.

## Curry Sauce

2 tablespoons butter, 1 tablespoon minced onion, 2 tablespoons flour, 3 teaspoons curry powder, 1 teaspoon lemon juice, 2 cups stock or water, 1 teaspoon salt, 1 cup cream.

MELT the butter in a saucepan, add the minced onion, and fry until a light golden brown; add the flour and curry powder, stir together, and reheat. Add the stock gradually, stir until thick and boiled. Simmer gently 5 minutes, add 1 teaspoon brown sugar, a quarter teaspoon grated lemon rind. Return the lid to saucepan and allow to stand half an hour. Reheat, add the cream and lemon juice. This sauce may be used for brains, eggs, vegetables, or oysters.

## Farmhouse Curry

$\frac{1}{2}$ lb cold meat, 1 onion, 2 tablespoons butter,  $\frac{1}{2}$  lemon, 2 tablespoons cream, 1 tart apple, 1 tablespoon chutney, 1 dessertspoon curry powder, 1 dessertspoon flour,  $\frac{1}{2}$  pint stock or milk.

MELT the butter in a saucepan, fry the

other 20 minutes. Add the lemon juice just before serving.

## Curried Veal

$\frac{1}{2}$ lb lean veal, 2oz butter, 1 small onion, 1 tart apple, 1 tablespoon curry powder, 1 tablespoon flour, 1 lemon, 1 dessertspoon grated coconut, 2 cups stock, salt, pepper, rice.

WIPE the meat with a damp cloth. Cut into even-size pieces about 1 inch square. Melt the butter in a saucepan, add the peeled and sliced onion, fry until a golden brown, add the veal. Fry slowly for a few minutes, turning frequently to sear the outside of meat. Sprinkle over it the curry powder and flour mixed to-



Figure 3. "Curry 1935"<sup>4</sup>

The different ways curry was thought about, often simultaneously, can be seen in one feature on curry from 1935 (see figure 3).<sup>5</sup> Pointing to the superior knowledge of “those who have lived in the East”, five recipes for curry were included. The “Dry Curry” and the “Egg and Banana Curry” can be situated within a trend of sweeter Australian curries.<sup>6</sup> The “Farmhouse Curry” was emblematic of curry being a popular means to transform leftovers by utilising cold meat; while the curried veal was more savoury. Instructions for “Quoorma Curry (A typical Indian curry)” contrasts with the other recipes in the complexity of ingredients. Instead of using curry powder, the recipe specifies individual spices and ground almonds. A half teaspoon of sugar is balanced by lemon juice.<sup>7</sup> Garlic, required here, was sporadically included in Australian recipes, and fresh ginger was only rarely used, but became increasingly

<sup>4</sup> *The Sydney Mail* 15 May 1935, 22.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., The Dry Curry was typical of the sweeter Australian curries with one pound of veal flavoured with butter, stock, curry powder, one tomato, banana, apple, tablespoon of chutney, sultanas and orange zest; the latter contained boiled eggs in curry sauce with one “tart apple”, and three sliced and fried bananas, rolled in coconut.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

popular during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>8</sup> While not new, this level of sophistication significantly predates a larger trend toward more refined, complex, and cultured understandings of curries in Australia. The feature epitomises the different ways curry was understood, and that these differences were not incompatible, but could, and did, exist in the same space.

### The First Three Decades

During the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Australian cookbooks had a consistent format. Curry garnered little commentary, and was featured in several, if not numerous, recipes in each of the texts examined. At the most, one of several curry recipes was designated as “Bombay” or “Indian” (see figure 4), although what made it particularly so is not clear.<sup>9</sup> Tasmania’s high school domestic science manual, the “*Central*” *Cookery Book* exemplifies and reinforces that curry was ordinary enough that it did not warrant any kind of explanation. Curry was offered as way of using up leftover meat, with “Cold Meat” sections presenting at least one curry recipe. The “*Central*” merely stated “[d]ishes made up from cold meats are - Curries, haricots, fritters, rissoles, shepherd’s pie, etc.”, thus positing curry with standard British-Australian fare.<sup>10</sup> Soup chapters usually included a recipe for Mulligatawny, mostly, but not always, using curry powder.<sup>11</sup> Curries made with seafood and raw meat or poultry were also featured, and curried eggs were popular.<sup>12</sup> Recipes for pickles and chutneys included curry powder in their ingredients.<sup>13</sup> The quantity of curry powder is relatively small, ranging from one teaspoon per pound of meat, to two heaped dessertspoons for a whole chicken.<sup>14</sup> Vegetables were rarely the primary ingredient, pointing to a hierarchy of value that privileged

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<sup>8</sup> Fresh ginger is quite a different flavour.

<sup>9</sup> See for example: Presbyterian Women’s Missionary Union of Victoria, *Home Cookery for Australia: All Tested Recipes* 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Melbourne: Arbuckle, Waddell & Fawcner, 1913), 44.

<sup>10</sup> A. C. Irvine, “*Central*” *Cookery Book* 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (Hobart: H. T. Whiting, circa 1920s). First published during the 1920s, the “*Central*” *Cookery Book* was reproduced many times. The 1976 14<sup>th</sup> ed. included favourite recipes such as Mulligatawny with curry powder, 12, curried eggs, 16, curried scallops, 22, savoury sausages, 74, and meat curry, 61, as well as the more modern Curried Chicken Hawaiian, 58, Piquant chops, 68, and Kofta Curry, using individual spices rather than curry powder, 79, A. C. Irvine, “*Central*” *Cookery Book* 14<sup>th</sup> ed. (Hobart: T. J. Hughes, 1976). This text provides an exemplar of cookbooks as instructive manuals, and can be scrutinised for ideas concerning what was deemed appropriate to be cooked and consumed, and given the many editions, changes over time.

<sup>11</sup> See for example: Ladies Committee of the Hobart Methodist Central Mission, *Hobart Cookery Book of Tested Recipes, Household Hints and Home Remedies* (Hobart: Davies Brothers, 1908?). Recipes in this cookbook are attributed to individuals; Kate Farrell, *Sylvia’s Cookery Book* (Launceston: Examiner, 1914), 7.

<sup>12</sup> See for example, Annie M. Monro, *The Practical Australian Cookery* 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Sydney: Dymocks, 1914), 23, 24, 28, 33, 74; See also: J. Walch & Sons, *The Tasmanian Home Cookery* (Hobart: J. Walch & Sons, circa 1920s), 115.

<sup>13</sup> Of which there was a minimum of one in six pickle recipes that used curry powder.

<sup>14</sup> See for example, M. Monro, *The Practical Australian Cookery* 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Sydney: Dymocks, 1914), 74.

cheap meats.<sup>15</sup> Curry recipes in cookbooks published during the First World War do not appear to change significantly, in frequency or ingredients.<sup>16</sup> In cookbooks from the Depression era, the association of curry with economy becomes more pronounced, with the appearance of recipes for curried offal.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> For the two rare exceptions, see: Deborah Buller-Murphy, *Lady Hackett's Household Guide* (Melbourne: Robertson & Mullens, 1940). With "over 3000" recipes, vegetables to be curried were: beans, 493; green peas, 500; lentils, 510; and a mix of vegetables, 512; Australian Woman's Mirror, *Cookery Book: A Selection of 2,000 Recipes from "The Australian Woman's Mirror"* (Sydney: The Bulletin, 1937), Cabbage Curry, 375; curried eggplant - "egg-fruit", 378; parsnips, 382; and potatoes, 383. Both cookbooks included considerably more recipes than most others examined. Given the *Mirror* recipes are contributed by named readers, this cookbook affirms vegetables were curried, but valued less than meat curries, given the absence of curried vegetables in most other cookbooks. Several recipes for curried offal also appear, suggesting another way curry was associated with thriftiness. See for example, "Curried Tripe", 218; and "Curried Sheep-Kidneys", 223.

<sup>16</sup> See for example, Kate Farrell, *Sylvia's Cookery Book* (Launceston: Examiner, 1914), 7, 12, 25.

<sup>17</sup> See for example, R. Wing, ed., *Jean Nelson's Cookery Book: 650 Recipes Selected from those submitted for Competition and Published in The Examiner Women's Supplement* (Launceston: Examiner, 1936), "Curried Tripe", 22. This book also included recipes for: "Curried Beef Hash", 22; "Curried Sausages", 18; "Delicious Brain Pie", 19; and roast wattlebirds, "plentiful in Tasmania", 19; The Australian Woman's Mirror, *"The Woman's Mirror" Cookery Book: A Selection of 2000 Recipes* (Sydney: The Bulletin, 1937), "Curried Tripe", 218; and "Curried Sheep Kidney", 223; Into the Second World War, Deborah Buller-Murphy, *Lady Hackett's Household Guide* (Melbourne: Robertson & Mullens, 1940), "Curried Tripe and Onions", 366; The promoting of curry as economical is also evident in the AWW. See for example, AWW 9 September 1933, 35.





● The spicy aroma of curry is most welcome at dinner-time on these cold winter evenings.

**F**LAVORING should be done carefully, as individual tastes require different quantities of curry powder. Too much does spoil the flavor.

The menus given on this page all include a curry dish as their foundation, with a balanced meal built around each.

Most curries can be prepared in advance, placed to cook over an electric heat, and just forgotten until mealtime.

Meat and gravy are cooked at once, thus avoiding extra last-minute preparation.

#### MENU 1

(See color photograph.)  
Curried Steak with Spaghetti  
Sliced Carrots, Peas, Potatoes  
Lemon Marshmallow Cream

#### CURRIED STEAK

One and a half pounds skirt, blade, round, or topside steak, 1 dessertspoon fat, 1 small onion, 1 clove garlic, 1 tablespoon flour, 1 dessertspoon curry powder, 1 teaspoon salt, 2 cups water or stock, 1 teaspoon sugar, 1 dessertspoon lemon juice, 2 tablespoons sultanas, 2 apples, 1½ cups cooked spaghetti or noodles, lemon wedges and parsley to garnish.

Trim steak, cut into 1½ in. cubes. Brown in hot fat in heavy saucepan. Remove, add sliced onion and chopped garlic, brown lightly. Stir in flour, curry powder, salt, water or stock. Continue stirring until mixture boils. Add meat, lemon juice, sugar, sultanas. Cover and simmer 2 to 2½ hours until meat is tender. Half an hour before serving add peeled, cored, sliced apples. Turn on to hot serving-dish, border with hot noodles or spaghetti dusted with paprika. Garnish with lemon wedges and parsley.

**LEMON MARSHMALLOW CREAM**  
One heaped tablespoon gelatine, 1 cup warm water, 1½ cups boiling water, 1 cup sugar, 1 cup lemon juice, 1 teaspoon vanilla, cherries, nuts.

Soak gelatine in warm water, add boiling water and sugar. Stir until gelatine and sugar are dissolved. Turn into basin, allow to become cold. Add lemon juice and vanilla, whip until white, frothy, and very thick. Pipe into serving-dishes, sprinkle with nuts and cherries. Chill until set.

#### MENU 2

Curried Rabbit Pie with Potato Crust  
French Beans, Shredded Cabbage  
Orange Meringue Pudding

#### CURRIED RABBIT PIE

One rabbit, 1 small onion, thin slice lemon rind, 1 teaspoon salt, 1 pint water, 1 pint milk, 1 tablespoon flour, 1½ teaspoons curry



THE DISHES pictured above form Menu 1, given on this page. Curried steak with spaghetti, sliced carrots, peas, and potatoes should be served piping hot. A cool lemon marshmallow cream follows. See recipes.

## Concerning CURRY

By Our Food and Cookery Experts

powder (or more according to taste), squeeze lemon juice, 3 cups mashed potato.

Wash rabbit, remove tail joint, soak 4 hour in salted water. Drain, cut into joints. Place in saucepan with sliced onion, lemon rind, salt, water. Cover, simmer 1½ hours or until rabbit is tender. Lift rabbit joints into ovenware dish. Strain stock, return 4 pint to saucepan with flour and curry powder blended to a smooth paste with milk. Stir until boiling. Cool slightly, stir in lemon juice, spoon over rabbit. Cover top

with mashed potato, reheat, and lightly brown topping in moderate oven. Serve with wedges of lemon.

**ORANGE MERINGUE PUDDING**  
Two tablespoons cornflour, 1 pint water, 2 cup sugar, grated rind of 1 orange and 1 lemon, strained juice of 2 oranges and 1 lemon, 2 eggs, 1 teaspoon butter, 2 extra tablespoons sugar for meringue.

Blend cornflour with ¼ cup of the water. Pinch balance of water, sugar, grated fruit rinds, and juices

in saucepan. When nearly boiling, stir in blended cornflour. Stir while mixture simmers 3 or 4 minutes. Cool slightly, fold in butter and beaten egg-yolks. Turn into ovenware dish. Top with meringue made by beating egg-whites stiffly, gradually adding sugar and beating until sugar dissolves and mixture holds its shape. Place in very moderate oven until meringue is set and lightly browned. Serve hot or cold.

#### MENU 3

Bombay Curry  
Jacket Potatoes, Spinach, Peas  
Sago Plum Pudding, Custard

#### BOMBAY CURRY

One pound finely chopped steak (round or topside), 1 tablespoon fat, 1 apple, 1 onion, 2 tomatoes, 1 dessertspoon curry powder (or less according to taste), 1½ dessertspoons flour, 1 teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon sugar, 1 sliced banana, 1 dessertspoon chutney, 2 tablespoons sultanas, 1 tablespoon desiccated coconut, 1 dessertspoon lemon juice, 1

to 1 cup vegetable or meat stock, chopped parsley to garnish.

Peel and dice apple, onion, tomatoes. Fry lightly 3 to 10 minutes in melted fat without allowing to brown. Add curry powder, flour, and stock. Stir until boiling, fold in all other ingredients. Cover, and simmer very gently 1 to 1½ hours until meat is tender. Stir occasionally to prevent sticking, as mixture is thick and dry. Serve piping hot with border of creamed potato sprinkled with chopped parsley.

#### SAGO PLUM PUDDING

Two tablespoons sago, 1 cup milk, 2 dessertspoons margarine or butter, 1 cup sugar, 1 scant teaspoon bicarbonate soda, 1 cup soft bread-crumbs, 1 cup mixed fruit, pinch salt.

Wash sago well, add milk. Stand overnight or as long as possible. Cream shortening with sugar, add soda dissolved in milk and sago. Fold in crumbs, fruit, and salt, mix well. Turn into greased basin, cover with greased paper, steam 2½ hours. Serve hot with custard or clear lemon sauce.

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The Australian Women's Weekly — June 26, 1948

"AEROPHOS," THE MODERN RAISING INGREDIENT . . . CONTAINED IN ALL LEADING BRANDS OF SELF-RAISING FLOUR AND BAKING POWDER

Figure 4. "Concerning Curry 1948"<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> AWW 26 June 1948, 33.

## World War Two

Community cookbooks, such as the *Dilston Cookery Book* (1940) and the *Austerity Cookery Book* (1943), that used curry the least, none-the-less assume the presence of curry powder in a pantry, as evident in an absence of commentary when used. Given the war time production context, and the overtly patriotic purpose of the latter work, it is possible to assert recipes were likewise selected for inherently Australian and British associations. In other words, food was consciously used in these works to reinforce delineations between familiar and foreign foods, between “us” and “them”. Supporting this argument is the selection of recipes included in an “International Dishes” section, strikingly similar in both books, but with significant differences.<sup>19</sup>

Here, the *Dilston* cookbook is dominated by nations that were allied with, defended, or contested by, Australia. There are, however, three recipes from the Australia’s foes - a Berlin Apple Tart, Budapest Apple Cakes and Italian Spaghetti and Meatballs.<sup>20</sup> The *Austerity Cookery Book*, largely a replication of *Dilston*, altered this selection of countries, dropping recipes from Axis countries (among others) and replacing them with Danish Blanc Mange, Egyptian Pudding, a Ginger Cake, from Norfolk, and a West Indian Cake - all places aligned with Australia on the battlefield.<sup>21</sup> These texts consciously invoked a sense of camaraderie between nation, empire and allies, albeit to different degrees. While curry powder was a familiar staple, curry, as a dish, was “othered”, and largely excluded from these World War Two cookbooks.

### “Authenticity”: Circa 1900 onwards.

A common criticism concerning the curries of early 20<sup>th</sup> century Australia was their poor quality, most evident in newspaper commentaries. Complaints were usually framed by a discourse of “authenticity”, speaking to the manner in which curry generated dual meanings of familiar and exotic. Common motifs were the establishment of an authors’ legitimacy as an arbitrator of this cultural knowledge, or the assertion that those who did have the cultural knowledge, would not “recognise” the dishes as curries. Followed by the offering of a recipe

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<sup>19</sup> Dilston Country Women’s Association, *Dilston Cookery Book*, 91; The Armed Services Nurses’ Welfare Association of Tasmania, *Austerity Cookery Book*, 42-3; The *Dilston Cookery Book* includes fourteen recipes in this section, the *Austerity Cookery Book* included nine.

<sup>20</sup> Dilston Country Women’s Association, *Dilston Cookery Book*, 91.

<sup>21</sup> The Armed Services Nurses’ Welfare Association of Tasmania, *Austerity Cookery Book*, 42-3.

for a “real” curry, this form recalls the concerns of the 1888 “Ladies Column”, as discussed in the previous chapter. These motifs were so common that one such feature, circulated by rural newspapers from 1903 to 1905, was republished verbatim three decades later in 1934.<sup>22</sup> It deplored the “yellowy, pale compound that we call curry”, and argued the food would not be “recognised by the Oriental as his “national dish.”” A method for “the foundation of all curries” promised to deliver a “crisp, browny-golden mixture one gets in India.”<sup>23</sup>

Discourses of authenticity are fraught, as scholars Allen S. Weiss, Roger Owen and Monica Perales have discussed. Authenticity is a “configuration of cultural values”, that stems from the innate desire to “develop cultural images” that assist in ordering and making sense of the world.<sup>24</sup> This becomes problematic when, as evident in the examples above, authentic is equated with tradition and is thus static. Not only does this process “render invisible...long histories” of flows of culture and goods, but importantly, these ideas “fuse onto the people.”<sup>25</sup> Cultures and peoples are perceived as unchanging and stereotyped, alongside the foods associated with them. These issues become evident when exploring the ways curry has been thought about in Australian history.

Early versions of curry rested on British conceptions of India, rather than an actual India. In time, the cultural meanings of curry were codified in Australia, although these meanings were multiple. The rise of authenticity debates reflect this fixing of meaning. In the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century assertions of cultural knowledge were expressed in many ways. Some dismissed “pale and melancholy concoction[s]”<sup>26</sup> and instructed, “[t]he right colour in curry is given by the genuine powders imported from India”.<sup>27</sup> Others recognised “the multitudinous varieties of Indian curry”,<sup>28</sup> offering, “a genuine Indian recipe”<sup>29</sup> and gave separate instructions “if a West Indian Powder is used.”<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Published in rural newspapers of Victoria and South Australia. See for example: *Traralgon Record* 6 November 1903, 1; *The Narracoorte Herald* 2 June 1905, 1.

<sup>23</sup> *Camperdown Chronicle* 17 March 1934, 3.

<sup>24</sup> Allen S. Weiss, “Authenticity,” *Gastronomica* 11.4 (2001), 75; Roger Owen, “Imaginary Restaurants with Real Food in Them: Reflections on the Quest for Authenticity in South East Asian Food,” in Richard Hosking, ed., *Authenticity in the Kitchen: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 2005* (Totnes, Devon: Prospect Books, 2006), 353.

<sup>25</sup> Monica Perales, “The Food Historian’s Dilemma: Reconsidering the Role of Authenticity in Food Scholarship,” *The Journal of American History* 103.3 (2016), 691.

<sup>26</sup> *Week* 22 April 1910, 6.

<sup>27</sup> *Brisbane Courier*, 13 December 1911, 15.

<sup>28</sup> *Week* 22 April 1910, 6.

<sup>29</sup> *Picton Post* 7 June 1911, 6.

<sup>30</sup> *Week* 22 April 1910, 6.



Advertisers of curry powders traded heavily in the discourse of authenticity. The Vencatachellum brand, first advertised in Australia in 1874, crossed the apparent binary of familiar and other, consciously inserting itself into a tradition of timelessness in the 1950s, assuring it was “The Same Grand Curry Grandma Used”, meanwhile asserting it was exotic: “Genuine Madras Curry Powder” (see figure 5).<sup>31</sup> This message was further reinforced with the phrase “unchanged in a changing world.”<sup>32</sup>



Figure 5. "Vencatachellum 1954"<sup>33</sup>

In the 1960s the brand dropped the grandma line, instead selling itself as “real” and Indian-made, with the approval of an Anglo-Indian officer.<sup>34</sup> One 1960s “Vencat” promotion featured the word “authentic” six times, assuring consumers that the combination of twenty-six “rare and exotic” spices would deliver an authentic “connoisseurs” curry.<sup>35</sup> In 1970, the brand conflated product with person and place; it was captioned, “Vencat is as Indian as I am”

<sup>31</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald* 24 October 1874, 2; AWW 1<sup>st</sup> May 1953, 58.

<sup>32</sup> AWW 28 May 1954, 76.

<sup>33</sup> AWW 28 May 1954, 76.

<sup>34</sup> AWW 20 July 1960, 50.

<sup>35</sup> AWW 23 May 1969, 32.

(see figure 6). The advertisement promised the consumption of the nation itself, “When you buy Vencat, you’re buying a piece of India.”<sup>36</sup>



Figure 6. "Vencatachellum 1970"<sup>37</sup>

Clive of India, a brand owned by McKenzie’s, differentiated between Indian flavour and actually being made in India, insisting it offered both.<sup>38</sup> The namesake and figurehead is an interesting choice of brand symbol. Robert Clive was a controversial figure, even in his own day, achieving power and wealth through corruption and exploitation.<sup>39</sup> As the Governor of

<sup>36</sup> AWW 1 July 1970, 71.

<sup>37</sup> AWW 1 July 1970, 71.

<sup>38</sup> McKenzie’s curry powder was shown in the 1888 Exhibition, Melbourne Centennial International Exhibition 1888-1889, “Official Catalogue of the Exhibits,” (Melbourne: Mason, Firth & M’Cutcheon, 1888), 812.

<sup>39</sup> Nicholas B. Dirks, *The Scandal of Empire: India of the Creation of Imperial Britain* (London: Belknap, 2006), 15, 16.

Bengal, Clive oversaw the famine of 1769 and 1770, under which millions died of starvation and disease.<sup>40</sup> Clive is a symbol of British conquest of India, and curry, of Anglo-India, but ironic as a symbol for a food product. “Genuine”, was the word favoured by this brand in asserting their curry powder was “Wholly made and packed in Madras – India.”<sup>41</sup> Clive of India’s emphasised that their genuine and authentic product was “The only curry powder made from 14 herbs and spices”.<sup>42</sup> Despite the intensity of debate over authenticity, it was somewhat overwhelmed by the popularity of sweet curries.

### **The Rise of the Sweet Curry: Circa 1930s to 1980s**

As Ian Simpson has observed, sweet curries are a particular feature of the history of curry in Australia.<sup>43</sup> Apple was an ingredient of British, and later Australian, recipes for curry. Tellingly, early recipes called for sour apples, suggesting the fruit was used as a replacement for rarer, if not unavailable, Indian souring agents such as tamarind and green mango. As indicated by the *Mackay Daily Mercury*, the use of such ingredients seeks to balance sourness and acidity with sweet, adding depth of flavour to a dish.<sup>44</sup> Gooseberries and rhubarb were other common souring agents used in early 20<sup>th</sup> century Australia.<sup>45</sup> In time, the “sour” specification disappeared, and apples were often joined in the ingredient lists by sultanas, and chutney. While Simpson attributed this trend to the incorporation of available ingredients (undoubtedly a factor), the duration of their popularity suggests a more complex picture.<sup>46</sup> The increasing sweetness of curries indicates changing palates in the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and suggests the influence of marketing campaigns.

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 52-4.

<sup>41</sup> AWW 1 July 1959, 42.

<sup>42</sup> AWW 21 May 1978, 102; Into the 1980s, Clive’s placed less emphasis on its authenticity, and more on its power to transform foods from many cultures. “Boring Bar-B-Q’s”, “Predictable Pizza’s and “Ho-Hum Hamburgers” could be enlivened with a “sprinkle” (“just like salt or pepper”) of “Give’em Curry...Give’em Clive’s”, AWW 16<sup>th</sup> May 1982, 119; AWW 7<sup>th</sup> July 1982, 107; AWW 10<sup>th</sup> May 1981, 75.

<sup>43</sup> Ian Simpson, “The Many Meanings of Curry: Australian Constructions of Indian Food,” *Locale: The Australasian- Pacific Journal of Regional Food Studies* 5 (2015), 111-3; Sweet curries were not unique to Australia, but did develop uniquely to local conditions, Leong- Salobir attributed the “unmistakably sweet taste of the colonial curry” in India to the addition of fruit relish, Cecilia Leong-Salobir, *Food Culture in Colonial Asia: A Taste of Empire*. London: Routledge, 2011, 50.

<sup>44</sup> *Daily Mercury* 5 July 1940, 3.

<sup>45</sup> A 1916 article insisted a “sour apple or a stem of rhubarb, or a handful of green gooseberries, should form part of even the most economical curry”, *Colac Reformer* 29 April 1916, 5.

<sup>46</sup> Simpson, “The Many Meanings of Curry,” 111-3. Another explanation is that apples may have provided bulk to curries, but given the lack of cheap vegetables in Australian curry recipes during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the availability of meat, this argument is less convincing.

The sweetening of curries built gradually in Australia, beginning in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and becoming most pronounced in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>47</sup> Sidney W. Mintz has pointed to a dramatic rise in sugar consumption during the 19<sup>th</sup> century globally, a process that evidentially continued in 20<sup>th</sup> century Australia.<sup>48</sup> A heightened appetite for sugar was echoed by a rise in sweet ingredients in Australian curries. As early as 1901, the rise of bananas as an ingredient in curries was noted. An article in the *Brisbane Courier* observed the formerly “very little known...and still less liked” fruit now appeared in most contemporary British cookbooks, and included a recipe for “Curried Bananas”.<sup>49</sup> Apple, rhubarb and “moist brown sugar” were ingredients included in a 1910 column entitled “The Science of Curry Making”.<sup>50</sup> A recipe of the 1950s called for a substantial quantity of sugar in addition to fruit:

I use 4 neck chops, 1 small pineapple or rings from a tin of a popular brand, 2 bananas, 1lb. peas, 1 large potato, 1 cup seeded raisins, a medium-sized cucumber, 1 cup sugar, 1 cup of stock, 1 dessertspoon curry powder, salt and pepper to taste, 1 dessertspoon dripping.<sup>51</sup>

Reflecting the production of bananas and pineapples in northern Australia, these abundant resources were creatively put to use.

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<sup>47</sup> See for example typical 19<sup>th</sup> century recipes: Abbott’s recipe for “Cut meats, fowls, or rabbits”, published in 1864, contains lemon juice and ketchup, but no fruit, 25; Rawson’s “Curried Cauliflower” used one apple and “cocoanut”, Wilhelmina Rawson (1878), *The Antipodean Cookery Book and Kitchen Companion* (Kenthurst: Kangaroo Press, 1985), 52, 60; An 1888 recipe from Victoria balanced a “desert-spoonful of castor sugar” with “a little chopped *sour* apple or gooseberries, and a tablespoon of vinegar”, *The Prahran Telegraph* 3 Nov 1888, 5.

<sup>48</sup> Sydney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1985), 196-200; Per person a year, sugar consumption in Australia rose from 15kg in 1828 to 36kg in 1861, 49kg in 1901, to a high of 57kg in 1951, stabilising at around 50kg until the late 1970s, before gradually declining to around 42kg into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Dave Roberts and Robin Walker, *From Scarcity to Surfeit: A History of Food and Nutrition in New South Wales* (Kensington, NSW: New South Wales University Press, 1988), 129; T.J. McNeill and W.S. Shrapnel, “Apparent Consumption of Refined Sugar in Australia (1938-2011),” *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 69.11 (2015), 1234-35.

<sup>49</sup> Significantly, the recipe used green bananas, a likely adoption of plantains, the cooking bananas used in equatorial regions. Green bananas were relatively rare in Australian recipes for curry, *Brisbane Courier* 9 November 1901, 13; Bananas, presumably of the sweet kind, became increasingly popular: See for example, “Good Curry” *Watchman* 7<sup>th</sup> September 1916, 3; “Curried Sausages”: “To 3 1/2lbs. sausages allow one apple, two tablespoons sugar, juice and rind of one lemon, one banana, or three tablespoons raisins if preferred; one onion, one dessertspoon desiccated coconut and one tablespoon curry powder, or less it liked”, *Telegraph* 7 July 1928, 14; Six bananas formed the primary ingredient of the curry in *The Dandenong Journal* 3 October 1935, 3; “Madras Curry” : for 3 pounds of topside, 2 tablespoons sweet chutney, 4 bananas, 2 apples, ½ cup sultanas and 1 tablespoon sugar, Hanna Pan, *The Australian Hostess Cookbook* (Melbourne: Nelson, 1968), 145

<sup>50</sup> *Week* 22 April 1910, 6.

<sup>51</sup> *Beverly Times* 23 April 1959, 5; See also, A “good combination of fruit and vegetables” for a 1933 “Fruit Curry” included “1 carrot, 1 onion, 1 apple or mango, 3 bananas cut into slices, - dessertspoonful raisins, 1 dessertspoonful sultanas, 3 slices of fresh pineapple...Chutney and desiccated cocoanut both improve this curry dish,” *Figaro* 17 June 1933, 15.

It is tempting to dismiss these recipes as dishes rarely, if ever, cooked. Examining community cookbooks ascertains, however, that sweet curries did form part of Australia's culinary culture. An example comes from *The 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday Cookery Book of the Country Women's Association in Tasmania*. Attributed to a Mrs. C. Chambers of Kettering, one particular curry recipe called for one medium crayfish, one apple, and one tablespoon each of chutney, tomato sauce and "dark plum jam", among several other ingredients.<sup>52</sup> The Catholic Women's League of Tasmania offered a curry with tinned pineapple, a Granny Smith apple, two bananas and a tin of tomato soup, aptly naming the dish, "Australian Curry".<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Tasmanian Country Women's Association (1957), *The 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday Cookery Book of the Country Women's Association in Tasmania*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Hobart: The Mercury Press, 1963), 21; The same recipe appeared in the 1960s edition of the Flinders Island CWA cookbook, Flinders Island Country Women's Association, (1946) *Flinders Island Souvenir Cookery Book* (Ulverstone: Ulverstone Press, circa 1960s), 10; The *21<sup>st</sup> Birthday* recipe for curried meat also utilised jam, this time raspberry, 47; A 1970 revised edition of the same book included a recipe for curry, this time listing pineapple, banana and sultanas among its ingredients, The Country Women's Association in Tasmania, (1957) *The 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday Cookery Book of The Country Women's Association in Tasmania* 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (1970, no publication details).

<sup>53</sup> The Granny Smith apple is an Australian variety, reputed to have been discovered by Maria Ann Smith around 1868, Michael Symons, *One Continuous Picnic: A History of Eating in Australia* (Adelaide: Duck Press, 1982), 96-97; Catholic Women's League of Tasmania, *Cookery Book* (Launceston: Regal Press, 1981), 5; Other community cookbooks to include sweet curries / savoury recipes with curry and a substantial sweet component were: Nursing Mothers' Association of Australia, (1976) *NMAA Cooks: Recipes for Busy Mothers* (Mulgrave, Victoria: New Litho, 1992): see for example "Curried Chicken with Peaches and Pears", 115; M. Whelan, *RSL Women's Auxiliary Cookery Book* (Burnie: M. Whelan, circa 1970s): see for example, "Chow Mein", 21 with pineapple and curry powder; Launceston's Victoria League Elizabethan Group, *Favourite Recipes: 1988 Cookery Book* (Launceston, 1988), "Malaysian Tuna" with pineapple and chutney, 30.



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**CURRY**



15oz. can GOLDEN CIRCLE Sliced Pineapple. 2 cups cooked rice, capsicum to garnish. Make up your favourite recipe for beef, lamb or chicken curry and turn it into a warmed oven-proof dish. Lightly fry the drained pineapple slices and arrange on top of the curry. Top each with a pyramid of cooked rice, decorate with bright red capsicum, and place in slow oven to heat through just before serving.

THE GOLDEN CIRCLE CANNERY, NORTHGATE, BRISBANE, Q.

PEEL A CAN TODAY!

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY — AUGUST 11, 1965

Page 37

Figure 7. "Golden Circle 1965"<sup>54</sup>

<sup>54</sup> AWW 11 August 1965, 37.

This taste for sweet curries continued into the 1980s, actively shaped by the promotions of corporate boards and companies such as the Australian Dried Fruits Association, The Australian Banana Growers' Council and Golden Circle tinned pineapple. The former published and widely distributed *A Sunshine Cookery Book* during the 1920s-1940s, hoping to assuage a glut in the market.<sup>55</sup> *Be Bold with Bananas* was a cookbook distributed in 1972, with numerous recipes involving curry and bananas.<sup>56</sup> Golden Circle, faced with poor export opportunities in the 1950s, produced a successful marketing campaign, firmly establishing the popularity of pineapple in Australian cuisine (see figure 7).<sup>57</sup> Sweet curries should be understood in the context of other popular sweet/savoury Australian dishes such as Apricot Chicken and Hawaiian pizza.

The taste for sweet curries was not confined to popular culture, but also had a presence in one of Australia's dedicated gastronomic magazines.<sup>58</sup> The majority of recipes used curry powder, rather than individual spices. Five had a substantial sweet fruit component, with a "Collanilling Curry" featuring tinned pineapple, sultanas and chutney, and "Curried Pork Hot Pot" requiring prune or apricot stuffing and fruit chutney.<sup>59</sup> The striking similarity of these recipes to those presented in more popular lower-class forums says less about class difference in Australia, and more about curry. The lack of differentiation (of ingredients, techniques and instruction on what constituted an appropriate setting for the production and consumption of curry) between the exclusive setting of the *Epicurean* magazines, and the popular *AWW*, asserts that curry was not exclusive, and not marked high or low culture in Australia. Moreover, curry (more broadly than sweet curries) shows, to use sociologist Krishnendu Ray's words, that elites "do not set the standard for culinary taste".<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Alison Wishart, "Soldiers, Sunshine and Sultanas: Dramatic Events Beset the Early Years of the Australian Dried Fruits Industry," *State Library Magazine* 9.4 (2016-17), 30-3.

<sup>56</sup> Australian Banana Growers' Council, *Be Bold with Bananas* (Cape Town: Gothic Printing Company, 1972).

<sup>57</sup> Michael Symons, *One Continuous Picnic: A History of Eating in Australia* (Adelaide: Duck Press, 1982), 188-193; Promotions asserted "Spicy Meat Loaf...Helps you hold your man with this 'perfume!'" (with tinned pineapple, brown sugar and curry powder), *AWW* 29<sup>th</sup> May 1957, 51; "Gold-Coast Salad" (curry mayonnaise, celery, red pepper, apple, banana, walnuts, lettuce and slice ham), *AWW* 22 March 1978, 88; "Add a Little Sunshine, Golden Circle, Naturally", with "Curried Pineapple Lamb" (1kg meat, onions, carrot, stock, 1 tablespoon lemon juice and zest, 450g tinned pineapple with juice, 1 tablespoon brown sugar), *AWW* 24 June 1981, 94. Golden Circle published numerous cookbooks from the 1960s including their *Golden Circle Tropical Recipe Book* (Brisbane: Simpson, Halligan & Co., undated)

<sup>58</sup> Of a sample of twelve *Epicurean* magazines from between 1968 and 1979, five contain curry recipes, several with multiple.

<sup>59</sup> *Epicurean* 49 (1974), 46; *Epicurean* 53 (1975), 19.

<sup>60</sup> Krishnendu Ray, *The Ethnic Restaurateur* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2016), 189.

### **Increasing Sophistication: Circa late-1960s onwards.**

The rise in sweet curries in Australia was countered by a concurrent trend characterised by increasing sophistication. This strand should not be confused with the heightened concern for authenticity, for the two did not necessarily equate. The second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a gradual increase in more subtle and refined curries that demonstrated heightened cultural knowledge, although it should be emphasised there was always some evidence of this trend during European settlement of Australia.<sup>61</sup> Dishes such as Rogan Josh and Korma appeared with increased frequency, with recognition of regional and cultural variations. Recipes were given with instructions to make the dishes from scratch.<sup>62</sup>

The heightened sophistication of curries occurred in the context of broader cultural, economic and political change in Australia during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This gradual shift significantly impacted Australian food culture, particularly from the 1960s, and was influenced by many factors. The World Wars saw Australians engaged with the international through travel (to war) and migration. Post-Second World War migration brought refugees from a wider range of European countries than previously, increasing the cultural diversity of Australia's population. A booming economy allowed for greater emphasis on lifestyle and an accompanying interest in, and ability to, travel.

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<sup>61</sup> See for example: An account from one Captain Basil Hall, published in the *Sydney Empire* in 1852, articulated a complex conception of curry: after giving his recipe for "a tolerable curry", he discussed the regional differences in Indian cooking (for example, "northern provinces of India, it is common to add a little milk or cream, and still more frequently a little curdled and acidulated milk, called dhye") and the curry of the "Malays" (who used "the ground kernel of the fresh cocoa nut"). The many different types of rice consumed in these areas, was also discussed: "[t]hey differ in almost every province of India, in each of which, also, there are upwards of a dozen varieties". The origins of curry were contested by Hall: "I dare say it will surprise most people – old Indians included – to learn that the dish we call curry...is not known to the Persians, Arabs, Chinese, Bermans [sic], Siamese, or to any of the Indian Islanders. Neither is it known, even at this day, to the inhabitants of Hindostan itself, except to such as are in frequent communication with Europeans." It was speculated that curry may have been introduced by the Portuguese from the Americas. *Empire* 22 January 1852, 3.

<sup>62</sup> See for example, regional variation is broadly recognised in Ellen Sinclair, ed., (1970) *The Australian Women's Weekly Original Cookbook* (Sydney: Golden Press, 1989), 129-30; Charmaine Solomon, "A Beginners Guide to Cooking Great Curries," *Family Circle* 28 June 1985, 64-70; These trends are also evident in community cookbooks: The Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union (1973) *Cookery Book* (Mebourne: Lothian, 1980), includes a curry from both Ceylon and India in the international section, using individual spices (136, 140). Other curries (chops, tuna and steak) are situated outside of this section, 53, 52, 40.



The White Australia Policy was officially abolished in 1973, as an international movement for social equality and civil rights movements reverberated through the nation.<sup>63</sup> Increasingly aware of our proximity to Asia, Australia shifted its gaze to its own neighbourhood. The Colombo Plan and Vietnam War resulted in greater migration from various Asian countries.<sup>64</sup> Places such as Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand became popular destinations for Australian travellers, who brought their experiences and the taste for foreign foods back with them. Meanwhile, those who remained at home engaged with exotic places through food, in restaurants, on the television, and in their own homes.<sup>65</sup> Amidst this diversification, curry performed well. Knowledge of exotic foods such as complex curries was assisted by influential cultural mediators such as the AWW and Charmaine Solomon.<sup>66</sup> These communicators constructed the rules around Australian conceptions of curry, asserting what was appropriate, and what was not. AWW produced curry recipe booklets in the consecutive years of 1967 and 1968.<sup>67</sup>

While some have framed this diversification as a “turn to ‘ethnic’ foods”, this “turn” was very much on Australia’s own terms.<sup>68</sup> Picking and choosing dishes, techniques and flavours that suited, Australia engaged with, and integrated, foods from the Asia-Pacific region.

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<sup>63</sup> The dismantling of the White Australia policy is more complex than can be discussed here.

<sup>64</sup> The Colombo Plan was established in 1950, “to encourage students to move between British Commonwealth countries”, and had a particular impact after the mid-1960s relaxation of immigration laws, Jean Duruz, “From Malacca to Adelaide...: Fragments toward a biography of cooking, yearning and *laksa*.” In Sidney C. H. Cheung and Tan Chee-Beng, eds., *Food and Foodways in Asia: Resource, Tradition and Cooking* (London: Routledge, 2007), 191.

<sup>65</sup> To use Kristin L. Hoganson’s phrase, engagement with the foods of diverse places “constituted a form of popular geography”, Kristin L. Hoganson, *Consumers’ Imperium: The Global Production of American Domesticity, 1865-1920* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 111.

<sup>66</sup> During the 1960s, for example, one in four Australian households received the AWW. Historian Susan Sheridan has observed the popular impact of the magazine in introducing “new” foods and flavours into the Australian diet. Susan Sheridan, “Eating the Other: Food and Cultural Difference in the *Australian Women’s Weekly* in the 1960s,” *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 21.3 (2000), 320, 323; See also: Frances Bonner, “The Mediated Asian-Australian Food Identity: From Charmaine Solomon to *Masterchef Australia*,” *Media International Australia* 157 (2015), 108: “The ordinariness of the magazines and the regularity of with which they provided recipes for their readers made them arguably more important than cookbooks for the introduction and normalisation of new tastes”; Solomon can be understood as Australia’s equivalent to Madhur Jaffrey, who should also be recognised as influential in Australia. Jaffrey initially rejected the term curry, “the word ‘curry’ is as degrading to India’s great cuisine as the term ‘chop suey’ was to China’s...lumping it all under the dubious catchall title of ‘curry’, yet later published books with titles such as *Madhur Jaffrey’s Ultimate Curry Bible* (2003) and *Madhur Jaffrey’s Curry Nation: Britain’s 100 Favourite Recipes* (2012), Parama Roy, *Alimentary Tracts: Appetites, Aversions and the Postcolonial* (London: Duke University Press, 2010), 157. Solomon, in contrast had no such qualms, choosing instead to explain her conception of the term, as will be discussed later.

<sup>67</sup> The latter was largely advertiser driven, and as Keen’s Curry was a promoter, will be discussed in chapter three.

<sup>68</sup> Sheridan, “Eating the Other”, 319.

Part of this was the incorporation of dishes from cuisines other than India, under the label “curry”. In Australia for example, Thai Green Curry and Rendang Curry are prominent. In this way, the history of curry in Australia diverged from that of Britain’s. This is partially about the conception of curry “as a broadly colonial dish, not one tied to any specific region or peoples”, reflecting imprecise colonial “flattening” of foreign cuisines, and the international diasporas of indentured Indian workers.<sup>69</sup> As shown, however, Australians had very much conceptualised curry as tied to India, if not British India, at least until the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

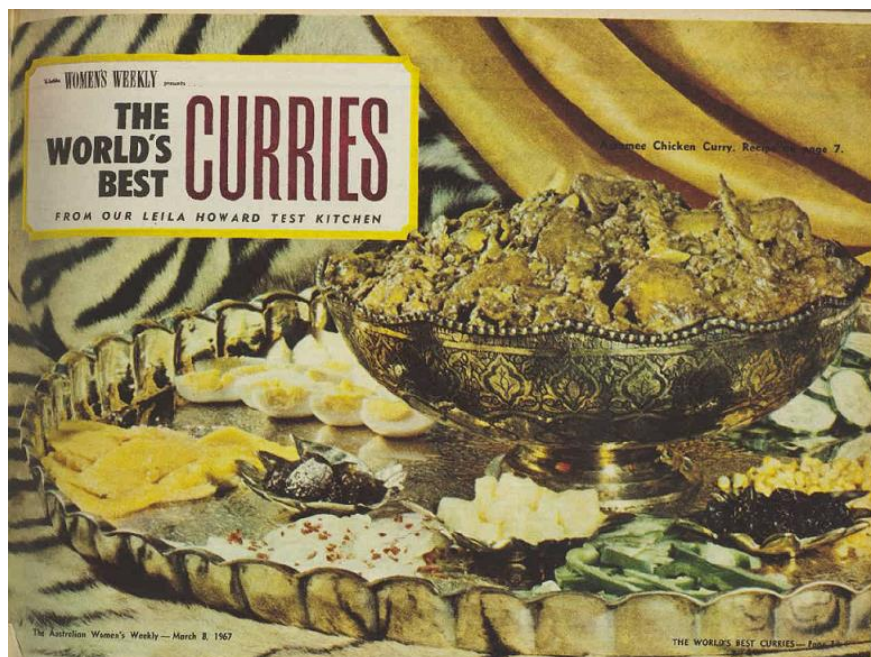


Figure 8. "Curries 1967"<sup>70</sup>

By 1967 the AWW had published a booklet devoted to “The World’s Best Curries” (see figure 8).<sup>71</sup> The recipe collection simultaneously demonstrates an increased sophistication in understandings of South Asian cuisine, while presenting some questionable cultural knowledge. The best, readers were enlightened, came from Southeast Asia and were characterised by their “subtle blending of spices intended to enhance, not overpower”.<sup>72</sup> A country by country guide, “where they originated”, gave regional and historical information on

<sup>69</sup> Lauren Janes, *Colonial Food in Interwar Paris: The Taste of Empire* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 118.

<sup>70</sup> “The World’s Best Curries: From Our Leila Howard Test Kitchen,” AWW 8 March 1967.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Southeast Asia here included India and Pakistan.

the food practices.<sup>73</sup> Curry powder, paste and sauces are called for, although only as a “starter”, with the addition of other spices. “Bengali Aubergine Curry” sits alongside a “Ceylonese Fruit Curry”.<sup>74</sup> Information about accompaniments such as sambols and Bombay duck were suggested alongside garnishes of fried bacon and crumbled potato chips.<sup>75</sup> Instructions on “How To Eat Curry” were closed with an advertisement for Keen’s Curry, reassuring readers of the acceptability of its “rich true Indian flavour”, in a increasingly complex culinary world.<sup>76</sup>

Charmaine Solomon was an important mediator of cultural knowledge pertaining to South Asian foods, specifically curry. An entrant in a cookery competition for *Woman’s Day* in 1964, Solomon was encouraged by the doyenne of Australian domestic cookery, Margaret Fulton, to publish her first cookbook, *South East Asian Cookbook*, in 1972.<sup>77</sup> Solomon’s heritage, Sri Lankan born with a maternal Burmese lineage and a grandmother who spent considerable time in India, is reflected in her cookbooks.<sup>78</sup> It also importantly demonstrates the permeability of national boundaries to flows of people, but particularly to food culture, and goes some way towards assisting in accounting for the incorporation of various cultures’ dishes as “curry” in Australia. Examining Solomon’s works, alongside Doris M. Ady’s earlier, but less renowned curry cookbook, reveals that curry was used to introduce Australians to the food cultures of Southeast Asia.<sup>79</sup> Curry was a stepping stone, itself a mediator, assisting in making unfamiliar cuisines accessible.

The centrality of curry to Solomon’s first work the *South East Asian Cookbook* is evident from the outset.<sup>80</sup> Solomon articulated her conception of curry, “[a]verage Westerners,

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<sup>73</sup>This was written by the owner of the “Bengali” restaurant in Sydney, Mr A. E “Tiger” Ady, “The World’s Best Curries: From Our Leila Howard Test Kitchen,” *AWW* 8 March 1967, 2.

<sup>74</sup> The first included a combination of fresh and dry spices, the latter with pineapple, pawpaw, bananas, apples, sultanas and currants. *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>76</sup> “for Westerners... a fork and spoon are best - not just a fork”, *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>77</sup> Frances Bonner, “The Mediated Asian-Australian Food Identity: From Charmaine Solomon to *Masterchef Australia*,” *Media International Australia* 157 (2015), 103; Subsequent publications included *The Complete Asian Collection* (1976), *Indian Cooking for Pleasure* (1978), *The Curry Cookbook* (1980) and *Hot & Spicy Cookbook* (1991), among others.

<sup>78</sup> Charmaine Solomon, (1972) *South East Asian Cookbook* (Sydney: Paul Hamlyn, 1976), 107.

<sup>79</sup> Doris M. Ady, *Curries from the Sultan’s Kitchen: Recipes from India Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon* (Sydney: A.H. & A.W. Reed, 1968). The changing nature of Australian society and food culture was observed by Ady: Written for the “Australian and New Zealand housewife...[who] has received strangers from all over the world into her family circle, and has been quick to profit from the experience.” Ady hoped her work would “open up to her the infinite connotations of the word “curry”, and introduced to her the art of spice cooking”, 9; Ady was the wife of “Tiger” Ady, (see footnote 71). Similarly to Solomon, Ady spent formative years in Burma, Ceylon and India, before immigrating to Australia, backcover.

<sup>80</sup> The cover of 1976 reprint is dominated by a photograph of a “Panthé Kowshwe”, a Burmese “mild curry”, and the opening photograph within the book is of individual spices entitled “curry ingredients”. The body of

asked what food they associate with India, will name curry. But every spiced dish is not a curry, and curry is not just one dish”, and warned against throwing “everything” (namely fruits) in.<sup>81</sup> The Indian and Sri Lankan curry recipes included either use individual spices, or curry powder in addition to other spices.<sup>82</sup> It is here that we begin to see dishes from other countries, termed curries, incorporated into Australian cuisine: “A Burmese meal is most often plain white rice served with curries and balachaung”, although “[c]urry powders are unknown in Burmese cooking.”<sup>83</sup> Likewise, a “typical Thai meal” was centred on rice and “a curry similar to a Burmese curry” among other dishes. “Rendang Daging: Dry Fried Beef Curry” is included as an Indonesian dish, but there is no recipe for a Thai curry.

Solomon’s 1980 *The Curry Cookbook*, written with her husband, Reuben, continued this framing of curry.<sup>84</sup> While adding nuanced cultural knowledge through commentary and naming individual dishes in their language of origin, this work acknowledges that it is written with “the inexperienced westerner” in mind.<sup>85</sup> The aim of the text, “is not to split hairs but please the taste buds...we’ll play your way.” Nonetheless, some boundaries around curry are delineated, “[p]lease don’t expect to find those strange and spurious dishes that masquerade under the name of curry and are only the leftover roast disguised in a yellow sauce thickened with flour and flavoured with what some people are pleased to call ‘curry’...[with] bits of apple, banana, and sultanas”.<sup>86</sup>

The growth of culturally sophisticated understandings of curry, as highlighted by the Solomons, did not override all other meanings. In contrast, *The AWW Easy Curry Cookery* (1991), *Curry* presented relatively complex curry recipes using combinations of individual spices, but with little attempt at understanding the cultures from which these recipes emerged. Dishes rarely featured specific names, rather using general descriptions such as “Mild Chicken

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recipes is prefaced by a guide to cooking equipment, opens with the clause, “[i]f you are serious about cooking curries...”, *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 10, 101.

<sup>82</sup> Sri Lankan, or Ceylon, as it is still called here, curry powder is dry roasted and quite different to Indian style curry powder, *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 50. Other Burmese curries include “Prawn and Bamboo Shoot Curry”, 55; and “Fish Kofta Curry”, 56.

<sup>84</sup> Curry recipes came from India, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Burma and Kampuchea. Curry from outside of these countries is not discussed, Charmaine and Reuben Solomon, *The Curry Cookbook* (Sydney: Lansdowne Press, 1980).

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, inside sleeve; Curry powder is not entirely dismissed, but consumed with caution, with stress placed on making one’s own powders and pastes. The ratio of rice to curry (3:1) is emphasised at numerous points within the work, with the suggestion of lower meat consumption having economic and health benefits. Despite this theme, the vegetable curry section is relatively brief in comparison to meat, seafood, and poultry chapters, 12-13.

<sup>86</sup> And, “tastes better with fingers”, *Ibid.*, Blurb, 11.

Curry”. Questionable cultural knowledge (“India is not a great seafood eating nation”) and the inclusion of Chinese inspired appetisers, contributes to a generalisation of Asian culinary cultures, suggesting the continuation of a homogenous curry “other”.<sup>87</sup>

Curry was increasingly cooked and consumed in a diverse manner of ways and contexts during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Curry powder remained a constant in Australian pantries, but paste was consistently available and, late in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, became popular alongside ready-made sauces.<sup>88</sup> While curry appeared on the menus of public eateries at least since the 1840s, the relaxation of immigration laws in the 1960s and 1970s saw a proliferation of South Asian restaurants and takeaways selling curry.<sup>89</sup> The diversification of curry was matched by a codification of meanings around curry. Claims of authenticity, although asserted as such, rarely equated to accurate cultural knowledge. Examining the rise of sweet “Australian” curries has illustrated the development of curry to local conditions, pointed to a sweetening Australian palate, the influence of advertisers on taste, and shown curry to cut across distinctions of class. Increasingly sophisticated cultural understandings of curry in the mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the incorporation of dishes from other cultures under the label of curry, in different ways articulate Australia’s growing engagement with the Asia-Pacific region. Historical events and social change have been demonstrated to have impacted on ideas of curry, revealing the entanglement of the everyday with the broader forces of history. Developing this idea, chapter three shows how conceptions of curry, as promoted by advertisers, at times reinforced discourses of difference.

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<sup>87</sup> Maryanne Blacker, ed., *Australian Women’s Weekly Home Library Easy Curry Cookery* (Sydney: Australian Consolidated Press, 1991), 51, 72, 3, 60.

<sup>88</sup> See for example, *Hobart Town Courier* 21 May 1831, 3; Southeast Asian curry pastes, such as Thai Green Curry, became particularly popular in the 1990s. See for example “Darley Street Thai Chuu Chii (Red Curry) of Coffin Bay Scallops”, a sophisticated concoction of individual spices and Australian produce, *Sydney Morning Herald* 15 June 1993, 31.

<sup>89</sup> See for example, “IN SYDNEY, no house can with Dunsdon’s Compare... And his curries possess the true Indian zest,” *Sydney Morning Herald* 6 June 1843, 3; “GILL’S RESTAURANT. M’ GILL respectfully apprises the public that he has engaged the services of an Kust’ Indian Cook, for the express purpose of preparing Mulligatawny Soup and Currie, for the visitors to his Commercial Ordinary, and that these articles, so prepared, have been pronounced by old Residents in the Presidences to be the acme of perfection”, *The Australian Journal* 4 November 1845, 4; “PALMER’S LIVBRPOOL ARMS LUNCHEON ROOMS. Pitt and King streets. Daily Bill of Fare:-Roast and boiled poultry, soups, roast beef, lamb, &c., curries, pork chops, steaks, &c., &c. Blake’s colonial wine on draught”, *Empire* 21 May 1860, 1.

# “Rose for England, Shamrock for Ireland, Keen’s Curry for Tassie”: A Case Study of Keen’s Curry Powder

Keen’s Curry Powder presents a significant case study of curry in Australia. Examined across two centuries, this chapter explores the meanings constructed around curry, as represented in Keen’s advertising. The material is structured temporally, dealing with advertising themes as they appear, while reflecting that these themes were not necessarily constrained into distinct time periods. For curry powder to be produced in Tasmania, a “distant outpost” of empire during the 1860s, speaks of the complex and “bonded” nature of empire. That there was a supply of spices available in Tasmania for a commercially viable product, attests to the efficient trade networks that connected the colony to empire.<sup>1</sup> In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Keen’s advertisements provide insights into connections, and contemporary understandings, of Tasmania within the world. Into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Keen’s brand is shown to position their product at various times as local or exotic, and sometimes both, and the implications of this. Here again, the associations made around curry demonstrates the Australian negotiation of identity. As the century progressed, Keen’s took to the national stage, and became a staple pantry item for many homes across the nation.

## Beginnings

Keen’s blended their curry powder in Tasmania.<sup>2</sup> Joseph Keen arrived in Tasmania in 1843 as a bounty immigrant, practising cabinet making.<sup>3</sup> By the early 1850s, he was an

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<sup>1</sup> Troy Bickham, “Eating the Empire: Intersections of Food, Cookery and Imperialism in Eighteenth-Century Britain,” *Past and Present*, 198 (2008), 72.

<sup>2</sup> Other curry brands such as Vencatachellum and McKenzie’s imported and, in the latter example, packaged curry powder under their own name, Beverly Kingston, “A Taste of India,” *Australian Cultural History* 9 (1990), 44.

<sup>3</sup> Jack Edwards, *Out of the Blue: A History of Reckitt and Colman in Australia* (Sydney: The Dominion Press, 1982), 39; Lynn Davies, “Keen, Joseph (1819–1892),” *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/keen-joseph-13019/text23539> (Accessed 7th September 2017).

established householder, storekeeper and postmaster in Kingston, south of Hobart. Keen and his wife Annie produced a range of sauces and condiments, including curry powder.<sup>4</sup>

Keen's distinctive combination of spices won a gold medal at the 1866 exhibition, heightening the significance of the role played, and meanings generated, by the presence of curry powder at such an exposition.<sup>5</sup> Many Tasmanian products were exhibited, largely representing agricultural prowess.<sup>6</sup> As a site promoting consumerism, western power and racial demarcation, the success of curry powder complicates the apparently neat division between "white" and "other". The presence of curry powder serves to remind us of connections to empire, yet here, appears thoroughly absorbed as a Tasmanian product, indicating a conflicting hybrid identity in which "other" overlaps with "own".<sup>7</sup> Curry, as confirmed by Keen's gold medal, appears part of Australia's burgeoning "cultural heritage and national identity".<sup>8</sup> The brand's success, locally and internationally, speaks for the brand's significance.

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<sup>4</sup> Keen was active member of the community: See for example: *Courier* 8 March 1853, 3; *Launceston Examiner* 10 Sept 1853, 10; *Courier* 29 Nov 1853, 2; Davies, "Keen, Joseph (1819–1892)"; Current marketing emphasises the continuation of the product's ingredients: "KEEN'S Traditional Curry Powder is a classic recipe that has stood the test of time and delighted taste buds across the country", Keen's Curry Facebook Page. [https://www.facebook.com/pg/KEENS-CURRY-126480657372461/about/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/KEENS-CURRY-126480657372461/about/?ref=page_internal) (Accessed 21 July 2017); There is some suggestion, however, that the blend has been altered. R. A. Farrell recorded that "some fifteen different spices" formed the powder, R. A. Farrell. *Notable Tasmanians*. (Launceston: Foot and Playsted, 1980); Today's ingredients (as listed on the tin) point to an unusual blend of spices for a curry powder, with celery seed but no cumin: turmeric, coriander, salt, fenugreek, black pepper, chilli, rice flour, allspice and celery; Keen's Brand Manager did not respond to enquiries.

<sup>5</sup> As noted in Chapter One, the other curry powder displayed, Lavers, also won a Gold Medal in 1866. The curry powder is somewhat perplexingly listed under "Manufacturers and the Useful Arts" in category for "Leather, Bone Dust, Animal Charcoal..." and so forth. The only other edible substance in this group was honey. It was differentiated from almost all other foods presented by Tasmania, which were listed under "Agricultural, Horticultural, and Indigenous Vegetable Products", Intercolonial Exhibition 1866, "Official Catalogue." 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Melbourne: Wilkie, Welch and Co., 1866), 77.

<sup>6</sup> Intercolonial Exhibition 1866, "Official Catalogue," 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Melbourne: Wilkie, Welch and Co., 1866), 77, 18, 69-85.

<sup>7</sup> Keen's advertised as "locally made" until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>8</sup> Nelleke Teughels, "Introduction," in Peter Sholliers, and Nelleke Teughels, eds. *A Taste of Progress : Food at International and World Exhibitions in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2015), 9.

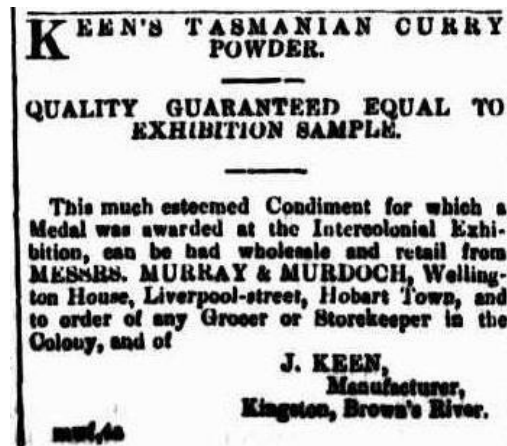


Figure 9. "Keen's 1869"<sup>9</sup>

With their achievement at the 1866 exhibition, Keen's Curry had found a firm platform on which they advertised for many years to follow (see figure 9). Promotions from 1869 promised "quality guaranteed, equal to exhibition sample".<sup>10</sup> The company also stressed that it was a Tasmanian product until the 1950s, with advertisements entitled "Keen's Tasmanian Curry Powder".<sup>11</sup> In 1874, one Hobart grocer promoted Keen's alongside other branded commodities, primarily from abroad. This indicates that despite Keen's own framing of the product as local, it was associated with imported goods, and underlines how curry generated simultaneous meanings of ordinary and exotic.<sup>12</sup>

### Upping the Ante

Joseph Keen died on the 3 March 1892.<sup>13</sup> The company went to his widow, Annie, who lived until 1915. Although historian Jack Edwards and curator Lynn Davies pinpoint the company being transferred to the Keen's son-in-law Horace Watson only after Annie's death, an 1897 trademark registration in Watson's name suggests the takeover took place significantly earlier.<sup>14</sup> Accompanying the change of hands was a shift in the content and quantity of

<sup>9</sup> *Mercury* 26 May 1869, 1.

<sup>10</sup> *Mercury* 26 May 1869, 1.

<sup>11</sup> *Mercury* 26 May 1869, 1.

<sup>12</sup> *Mercury* 30 June 1874, 1.

<sup>13</sup> *Mercury* 2 April 1892, 1.

<sup>14</sup> Edwards, *Out of the Blue*, 39-40; Davies, "Keen, Joseph (1819-1892)"; *New South Wales Government Gazette* 18 June 1897, 4.



advertising material. Watson was a prolific, and sometimes controversial, campaigner.<sup>15</sup> Keen's built its brand in the last years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with advertisements increasing dramatically. Their segmented campaign targeted consumers in different ways, reflecting a particular newspaper's readership.<sup>16</sup>

Keen's advertising was obviously gendered. While an aspect of the segmented approach, addressing advertisements to "housewives" more importantly reflected and reinforced gender norms.<sup>17</sup> Men were the breadwinners, engaged in industry, business and trades outside of the home. In contrast, women were responsible for household duties, namely cooking and making "hubby smile".<sup>18</sup> While addressed to women, advertisements implied that the foodstuff was for their men, exemplified in a 1903 promotion: "serve up a good dish of Keen's Curry and your hubby won't roam round when he should be home".<sup>19</sup>

## Local and International

From 1898, a particular strategy was to engage with contemporary news events, an approach widespread among advertisers in Australia at this time.<sup>20</sup> Keen's engagement with contemporary issues helps highlight flows of news events, and how Tasmanians engaged with

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<sup>15</sup> Like Keen, Watson was an active community member, involved in everything from the local bowls club to the advancement of science. He was the first person to extract eggs from a platypus, and more significantly, in 1903 made a phonograph of the language and songs of Fanny Cochrane Smith, an indigenous Tasmanian. This was the first time this technology had been used for documentary purposes, and the first time an indigenous Tasmanian language had been recorded. It became of crucial importance in reconstructing the palawa kani language. Bruce Watson, "The Man and the Woman and the Edison Phonograph: Race, History and Technology through Song,"

<http://www.brucewatsonmusic.com/documents/They%20came%20together%20through%20song.pdf> (Accessed 23 September 2017), 4.

<sup>16</sup> Tasmanian west coast (a booming mining area) newspaper advertisements were addressed to "Miners, Surveyors, Navvies, Smelters, Tradesmen and Business Folk" and in the area, notorious for inclement weather, the warming properties of curry were strongly emphasised. See for example, *Mount Lyell Standard and Strahan Gazette* 8 August 1899, 1; *Mount Lyell Standard and Strahan Gazette* 2 April 1901, 1; In the left-wing *Clipper* newspaper, Keen's publicity was directed at workers ("Saw-mill hands"), in the language of manual labourers ("even trains and engines go well with Keen's Curry"; and "it warmed the boys up"), *Clipper* 26 December 1903, 1; *Clipper* 18 August 1903, 1; *Clipper* 18 July 1903, 1.

<sup>17</sup> *Tasmanian News* 9 May 1898, 4; *Zeehan and Dundas Herald* 25 February 1921, 3.

<sup>18</sup> *Zeehan and Dundas Herald* 16 January 1912, 1; Mothers and wives who knew to purchase and make a delicious curry with Keen's were "clever" and "determined", *Daily Post* 21 June 1921, 7; *Advocate* 28 September 1928, 7; *Daily Telegraph* 18 June 1898, 3; *Tasmanian News* 9 May 1898, 4; A notable exception to this standard was framed as such, "Lady Bicyclist from abroad says...curry powder most delicious. She had tasted Keen's", *Federalist* 4 March 1899, 2.

<sup>19</sup> *Clipper* 11 July 1903, 1; The gendering of Keen's advertisements reoccurs throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It will, however, garner limited attention as, in line with Kaplan, the "deconstruction of separate [gender] spheres...leaves another structural opposition intact: the domestic in intimate opposition to the foreign", Amy Kaplan, "Manifest Domesticity," *American Literature* 70.3 (1998), 581.

<sup>20</sup> Bannerman, *Print Media*, 303.

world affairs. Advertisers were not limited to designated advertorial sections, and could place copies where they liked. Articles on the Spanish-American war for the Philippines were immediately followed, or even interrupted, by a few capturing lines to the tune of “URGENT MESSAGE for Tasmanians. Secure Keen’s Curry Powder. Highest Awards”.<sup>21</sup> Readers were bombarded with dozens of such advertisements.

The commodity was given a life of its own, active in international affairs.<sup>22</sup> Keen’s was framed as an agent of history, evident also in the brand’s deliberate association with Antarctic exploration, first in 1898, then again in 1914. Antarctica was one of the great unknowns of the age, “practically beyond men’s footsteps”, yet was not beyond the indomitable march of Keen’s success.<sup>23</sup> Tapping into the prevailing fascination with the Polar-regions and exploration, Keen’s took Tasmania onto the world’s stage: “[n]o known table condiment has ever got this far before, therefore, it is a feather in the cap of a flourishing Tasmanian industry”, and again in 1914, “one of the finest condiments the world has ever seen.”<sup>24</sup> Keen’s was posited as conquering the most extreme environment imaginable. The casting of the curry powder as the stuff that sustained heroic adventures to the distant and uncharted continent aligned Keen’s with the “great cause of science” and the progress of humankind.<sup>25</sup>

In 1914, this angle was again used in one of Watson’s more sensational promotions. It was announced in the press that “[t]he merits of Keen’s curry” had once more “reached the Antarctic region”. In the window of a Murray Street shop, “two noble-looking king penguins from Macquarie Island may be seen...The attitude of the penguins suggests to the onlooker that any one who eats any other curry but “Keen’s” is a fool.”<sup>26</sup> In sending the condiment to

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<sup>21</sup> *Tasmanian News* 5 May 1898, 4; See also for example: “FOUGHT BRAVELY OUT. Keen’s Curry Powder wins. Get it.” *Tasmanian News* 18 May 1898, 4; Local events were also referenced: “CENSUS not satisfactory, owing to omission on census paper to ascertain number of people using Keen’s Curry Powder”, and in the same edition: “WAGES Board Trouble. Rabbit Trappers Union demand rise in price of rabbits owing to immense consumption of curried rabbits at present. Blame Keen’s Curry for this.” *Tasmanian News* 12 May 1911, 4.

<sup>22</sup> Anne McClintock, *Imperial leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (London: Routledge, 2015), 220.

<sup>23</sup> *Critic* 29 May 1914, 3.

<sup>24</sup> *Mercury*, 19 December 1898, 2; *Critic* 29 May 1914, 3; The period between 1895 and 1922 was known as the “Heroic Age” of polar exploration, “epitomizing the progress of humanity” and offering the potential for “future colonization”, Nicoletta Brazzelli, “Heroic and Post-colonial Antarctic Narratives,” in Klaus Dodds, Alan D. Hemmings, and Peder Roberts, eds. *Handbook on the Politics of Antarctica* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2017), 69.

<sup>25</sup> There was “a sufficient quantity on board to last until 1901”, *Mercury*, 19 December 1898, 2; Keen’s was one of numerous brands to associate itself with Antarctic exploration, “Fry’s Pure Breakfast Cocoa” was promoted as travelling there with Captain Scott in 1910, *Examiner* 27 May 1910, 1.

<sup>26</sup> *Critic* 29 May 1914, 3; While Keen’s framed this promotion by asserting that the curry powder was the genuine item, like the “shells, sand, and penguins are real”, a protester in the *Mercury* saw the advertisement

Antarctica, and symbolically bringing the “Great Unknown Land” to Hobart through the penguins, it was signified that Keen’s Curry Powder transported Tasmania with it to “the land of ice”.<sup>27</sup>

The first suggestion of the product having any association with India, came on the 6 May 1899:

An Anglo-Indian gentleman’s remark: “I did enjoy that meal very much. Have you an Indian cook to make your dish of curry?” Not exactly! All our bright Tasmanian girls can hold their own. They use Keen’s Curry Powder.<sup>28</sup>

In another advertisement, a “Victorian visitor” pronounced, “I have been in India and tasted the native article, but in some respects it was inferior to your product.”<sup>29</sup> For Keen’s, these advertisements mark a divergence in their discourse on curry. Having formerly promoted their product solely as Tasmanian, Keen’s increasingly encourages consumers to think of curry as of Indian origin, while maintaining and generating local associations and pride. The curry powder was framed simultaneously as local and exotic. In the above advertisements, Keen’s adds a further layer to the hybrid identity of their product, through the endorsement of the “Anglo-Indian gentleman”, firmly establishing the presence, and connections between nodes, of empire.

The brand made connections between Tasmania and the world in the portrayal of its product. In 1902, one promotion ran “Rose for England, Shamrock for Ireland, Keen’s Curry for Tassie.”<sup>30</sup> Here, Keen’s attempts to establish itself as a local icon of international renown. The most famous example, on the foothills of Mount Wellington, of the company’s advertising

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as exploitative: “[t]he unfortunate amphibian, with a ticket tied on to its body, mopes forlornly on an imitation lake of glass, and is apparently left without a drop of water...something should be done to prevent advertising taking this objectionable form.” *Mercury* 1 June 1914, 2; Watson replied, asserting the penguin enjoyed salt-water swims and fresh fish, to “say nothing of the admiration of at least 10, 000 folk, young and old, during the past few days...the bird is very happy”, *Mercury* 2 June 1914, 8.

<sup>27</sup> *Mercury*, 19 December 1898, 2; *Critic* 29 May 1914, 3; Associating curry powder with Antarctica was not merely a construction of Watson’s. The spice blend had travelled with several notable explorers to the continent, helping transform meats such as seal and horse into palatable meals. Indeed, one of Captain Scott’s last meals before his death in 1912 was of Pemmican, flavoured with curry powder. He blamed the curry for severe indigestion that prevented sleep: “[t]hese are the steps of my downfall.” (593) The curry powder in this case, however, was almost certainly was not Keen’s. See also: April 7 1911: “the cooks rival one another in preparing succulent dishes of fried seal liver. A single dish may not seem to offer much opportunity of variation, but a lot can be done with a little flour, a handful of raisins, a spoonful of curry powder”, Robert F. Scott, *Scott’s Last Expedition* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1913), 220.

<sup>28</sup> *Federalist* 6 May 1899, 2.

<sup>29</sup> The curry powder tasted was stated to be 18 years old, *Tasmanian News* 13 May 1907, 2.

<sup>30</sup> *Clipper* 30 August 1902, 2.

was the construction of the “KEEN’S CURRY” sign in July 1905, written in “immense” white-washed stone letters (see figure 10). Visible behind Hobart city at “a distance of a mile and a half”, the sign provoked great controversy. On this occasion Watson made himself “particularly obnoxious”, according to local papers. It was despaired, “the advertising demon is everywhere”.<sup>31</sup> The sign, although faded, remains present today.<sup>32</sup> A landmark of South Hobart, it appears to have “set in stone” Keen’s status as an iconic Tasmanian brand.<sup>33</sup>



Figure 10. "Keen's Sign"<sup>34</sup>

Another way Keen’s was positioned in advertising with regard to the international was through a discourse of “purity”. The product was marketed as reliable and Tasmanian. As such, it was situated in opposition to a notional foreign item: “This locally made powder is pure and freshly ground”, and “does not contain adulterations common to many imported powders.”<sup>35</sup> Through these advertisements it is apparent how discourses of “pure foods” manifested in provoking fears of potential contamination, often from a foreign other.<sup>36</sup> Advertisements such

<sup>31</sup> *Daily Telegraph* 22 July 1905, 6.

<sup>32</sup> Over the years it was re-arranged by university students several times to read, “Hell’s Curse”, and “Fred’s Folly”, Edwards, *Out of the Blue*, 38; The former was reported as far afield as Geraldton, Western Australia, *Geraldton Guardian* 24<sup>th</sup> June 1926, 3; In the latter years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it became a barometer for locally contentious issues, some which reverberated internationally: “No Dams”, “Gunns Lie”, and in 1994, “No Cable Car”, Bruce Watson, “The Man and the Woman”, 4; Davies, “Keen, Joseph (1819–1892)”.

<sup>33</sup> In 1928, Keen’s was again framed as a Tasmanian “tradition”, “Back to Tasmania. Come, if it is only to taste some of the old day curry...as mother makes it.” *Advocate* 28 September 1928, 7.

<sup>34</sup> Bruce Watson, “The Man and the Woman”, 4.

<sup>35</sup> *Daily Telegraph* 5 June 1897, 2; See also, “Absolutely Pure”, *Federalist* 3 September 1898, 5; Elsewhere, it was stressed, “one flavour and one standard of purity”, *Clipper* 23 August 1902, 2; “freedom from deleterious compounds”, *Tasmanian News* 13 May 1907, 2.

<sup>36</sup> Edward J. T. Collins, “Food Adulteration and Food Safety in Britain in the 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries,” *Food Policy* 2 (1993), 96.

as these emerged at a time when industrialised foods were increasingly available, intersecting with consumer concerns over food safety and adulteration. This juncture played a significant role in the rise of branded foods, and is reflected in these promotions, offering consistency and safety from contamination.<sup>37</sup>

A heightened emphasis on the consumption of the “genuine” item in Keen’s advertising also speaks to concerns of adulteration, substitution and imitation. 1914 was ushered in with advertisements from Keen’s warning consumers to beware of mimicry, “no other name or fancy picture...One brand One Quality and the Old Label.”<sup>38</sup> This publicity signalled the arrival of a competitor on the market: “KeenO’s”. The rival had been announced in the press in late 1913 through a lengthy advertisement proclaiming it was “no imitation, but a genuine curry powder”, extolling its superior “purely Indian” flavour, and its purity. The new brand suggested a rift in the Keen’s family, and actively sought associations with both Keen’s Curry and the British Keen’s Mustard. The owner of KeenO’s, Edgar Keen was the son of Joseph Keen, “the original manufacturer of Keen’s”. Edward stated, “I was born in a curry factory...[and] have improved on my father’s work.”<sup>39</sup>

Trademarked with a yellow label, KeenO’s drew on international purity concerns reflected in new legislation, cautioning consumers “Be Careful Of What You Are Eating...The KeenO Curry Powder No.57 Is The Only Curry Guaranteed Under The Foods And Drugs Act, 1910.”<sup>40</sup> Advertisements had similar themes to Keen’s- quality, locally made, but placed greater emphasis on the product’s “Indian” flavour. Like Watson, Edgar Keen was an active marketer, distributing samples, holding competitions and sponsoring local events.<sup>41</sup> Nonetheless, it appears KeenO’s could not gain a footing against the entrenched Keen’s, and ceased advertising in August 1916.<sup>42</sup> Later in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a discourse of “genuine” surfaces again in Keen’s advertising, albeit in a slightly different manner, connected to ideas of authenticity. The message to consume the “real” item was matched only by the emphasis placed on the value of Keen’s.

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<sup>37</sup> Gabriella M. Petrick, “‘Purity as Life’: H. J. Heinz, Religious Sentiment, and the Beginning of the Industrial Diet,” *History and Technology* 27.1 (2011), 37-64.

<sup>38</sup> *North West Post* 5 January 1914, 3; *Zeehan and Dundas Herald* 9 January 1914, 1.

<sup>39</sup> *North West Post* 17 December 1913, 3.

<sup>40</sup> *Daily Telegraph* 3 January 1914, 1; James Harvey Young, *Pure Food: Securing the Federal Food and Drugs Act of 1906* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

<sup>41</sup> See for example *North West Post* 4 April 1914, 4; *North West Post* 5 March 1914, 4; *North West Post* 28 April 1914, 3

<sup>42</sup> Last advertisement appeared in *North West Post* 16 August 1916, 1.

## Economy

The message of economy was almost constant in the brand's promotions. Comparatively, the curry powder was not cheap at 10 pence.<sup>43</sup> It was the associations made by Keen's that signalled the thriftiness of curry.<sup>44</sup> Drawing on a long association of curry with poorer-quality meat, underlining the dominance of flesh in the Australian diet, and reflecting the lower economic status of Tasmania, the types of protein featured were cheap (see figure 11). Advertisements suggested, "[e]specially with Kangaroo, Rabbit".<sup>45</sup> Respectively a locally indigenous species and an introduced pest in plague proportions, these animals were considered inferior to cows and sheep.<sup>46</sup> Cold-meat cookery was also suggested, reflecting curry's roots as a means to deal with leftover meats in a pre-refrigeration era.<sup>47</sup> The World Wars did not affect Keen's worth: "Same Prices Same Flavour."<sup>48</sup> The framing of the product in terms of value and as a true Tasmanian product continued through the 1920s and 1930s, with advertisements saying little about the Depression, although the price of Keen's Curry dropped.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> A tin of "Moir's Orange Marmalade" was worth 7d., mutton leg chops cost 5 pence per pound, and the newspaper that advertised these goods, 2 pence, *Mercury* 4 January 1883, 1.

<sup>44</sup> Advertisements were addressed to the working classes, "miners, farmers, toilers", but also the more encompassing "Miners, Surveyors, Navvies, Smelters, Tradesmen and Business Folk", *Mount Lyell Standard and Strahan Gazette* 8 August 1899, 1; In response to a recently introduced controversial federal tariff, consumers were told that the "High Tariff does not affect...Price as Usual", *North Western Advocate and the Emu Bay Times* 25 October 1907, 4.

<sup>45</sup> *Daily Telegraph* 6 November 1897, 3; Reinforcing the status of meat in Australian cuisine is the absence of vegetables in Keen's advertising, suggesting that they were not considered appropriate currying material. As discussed in chapter two, this is supported in curry recipes from cookbooks examined, with few vegetable recipes. The exceptions were cookbooks that had a significantly larger number of recipes; Tasmania was "a version of the welfare state long before that term was invented", Henry Reynolds, *A History of Tasmania* (Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 143.

<sup>46</sup> Rabbit was often a prominent feature in Keen's advertising until the 1960s, with pictures of cute rabbits accompanied by slogans such as "Very Prime With...Keen's Curry Powder." *Clipper* 3 May 1902, 8; G. M. Hewitt, B. J. Richardson and P. M. Rogers, "Ecological Genetics of the Wild Rabbit in Australia. II. Protein Variation in British, French and Australian Rabbits and The Geographical Distribution of the Variation in Australia." *Australian Journal of Biological Sciences* 33.3 (1980), 371; Other locally abundant ingredients were proposed, "curried egg, curried oysters and curried tripe", and even "that skinny old rooster" was put to use, *Clipper* 15 August 1903, 1; *Clipper* 6 September 1902, 7.

<sup>47</sup> "Meat is dear enough, goodness knows. Get Keen's Curry and use every scrap", *Clipper* 30 August 1902, 3; Cecilia Leong-Salobir, *Food Culture in Colonial Asia: A Taste of Empire* (London: Routledge, 2011), 40; Ian Simpson, "The Many Meanings of Curry: Australian Constructions of Indian Food," *Locale: The Australasian-Pacific Journal of Regional Food Studies* 5 (2015), 110.

<sup>48</sup> *Daily Post* 2 February 1915, 3; *Examiner* 27 January 1942, 1; The tone during the First World War, although upbeat, reflected the war time context, "Strikes in the right place at the right time...UTRYIT", *Huon Times* 17 September 1918, 2. Occasionally, Keen's suggested a tin should be added to the reader's next parcel to the troops, "one 6d tin... makes strong curry for 60 soldiers," and upped the nationalist colloquial language, "We Got Keen's Curry in the Billycan at...Camp. It was bonzer", *Daily Post* 12 April 1916, 2.

<sup>49</sup> *Mercury* 12 May 1933, 2.



Figure 11. "Keen's 1907"<sup>50</sup>

## Transformation

Keen's promoted itself as a "first class article" that was "within reach of all".<sup>51</sup> The message of economy was not undermined by warnings of "cheap" and "common foods", or that Keen's was favoured by the wealthy.<sup>52</sup> Rather, lines such as "used by all principal families",<sup>53</sup> and "Best houses keep it"<sup>54</sup> point to a more nuanced advertising technique, targeting aspirational social climbers. It argued that while Keen's was affordable, it was not an ordinary condiment, but had the power to impress and transform, offering consumers a shared practice with all the "best families". Keen's was welcomed in "camp, cottage and mansion alike".<sup>55</sup> These advertisements recognised that food is used to differentiate and mark social boundaries, but asserted that Keen's cut across, and united, social classes. Economy did not equate to poor quality, and Keen's emphasised its calibre regularly.

Keen's offered "transformation" to its consumers in many ways. A cute rabbit could be transfigured into a delicious curry, spices had the power to metamorphose leftovers or a cheap meat into a meal fit for "the best houses". In doing so, those who bought and ingested Keen's could, symbolically, be transformed themselves. Moods were improved,<sup>56</sup> winter blues beaten

<sup>50</sup> *Tasmanian News* 3 April 1907, 1.

<sup>51</sup> *Tasmanian News* 6 April 1898, 2; *Tasmanian News* 12<sup>th</sup> May 1898, 4.

<sup>52</sup> *Daily Telegraph* 23 October 1897, 3.

<sup>53</sup> *Daily Telegraph* 3 November 1897, 3.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*; *Daily Telegraph* 6 May 1899, 3.

<sup>55</sup> *Zeehan and Dundas Herald* 6 July 1912, 2.

<sup>56</sup> "Wives! When you want a Hubby's Smile in Winter, give him Keen's Curry!" *Zeehan and Dundas Herald* 16 January 1912, 1.

away,<sup>57</sup> sickness turned to health,<sup>58</sup> and roaming husbands were compelled home.<sup>59</sup> This discourse reflects a broader trend in advertising, promising the construction of particular identities through consumption of material culture.<sup>60</sup> During the 1950s this theme is again evident, with a chef's hat on the housewife signifying the power of Keen's to confer the status of a professional. "To consume novel foods", Kristin L. Hoganson has asserted, "was to become the woman in the advertisement – the beneficiary of global networks of wealth, power and labor."<sup>61</sup>

Keen's Curry, a Tasmanian product inspired by empire, made a strong argument for its curry to be incorporated and absorbed into local diets. Keen's promotions petered out during the 1930s, likely reflecting the death of Watson in 1930.<sup>62</sup> Tasmanian merchant R. A. Farrell purchased the business in 1951.<sup>63</sup> In seeking to supply mainland markets, Keen's Curry came to the attention of the British firm Reckitt and Colman, manufacturers of Keen's Mustard in Australia. After a voluntary liquidation and the takeover of Keen's in 1954, the firm shifted production to Melbourne, and expanded distribution.<sup>64</sup> After this, the brand advertised to a national audience, and placed great emphasis on the exotic nature of curry.

## Becoming Australian

By April 1956, Keen's was advertising to a national market, most notably in the *AWW*.<sup>65</sup> With the labelling of the product as "New", the transition from Tasmanian to Australian was

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<sup>57</sup> "A cheerful home, bright fire, and well made dish of curry is happiness indeed, whether winter storms rage or not," *Federalist* 29 April 1899, 2.

<sup>58</sup> "We've all had the 'flue,' and almost worse than that, we had spoon fed soft food till we were sick. The folks recommended the spice cure, and we tried pure curry; and what a change, what a luxury, what an improvement— we had Keen's Curry Powder", *Clipper* 2 December 1899, 7.

<sup>59</sup> *Clipper* 11 July 1903, 1.

<sup>60</sup> See for example: Nayan Shah, "Cleansing Motherhood: Hygiene and the Cult of Domesticity in San Francisco's Chinatown, 1875-1900," in Antoinette Burton, ed., *Gender, Sexuality and Colonial Modernities* (London, Routledge, 1999), 19-34.

<sup>61</sup> Kristin L. Hoganson, *Consumers' Imperium: The Global Production of American Domesticity, 1865-1920* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 120.

<sup>62</sup> From "Ptomaine poisoning" contracted in "Columbo", *Advocate* 12 April 1930, 2.

<sup>63</sup> R. A. Farrell, *Notable Tasmanians* (Launceston: Foot and Playsted, 1980), 33.

<sup>64</sup> *Mercury* 4 December 1954, 35; Edwards, *Out of the Blue*, 39.

<sup>65</sup> Keen's was available in some areas of mainland Australia, although the company did not themselves advertise before 1956. See for example: the Victorian *Advocate* 6 November 1909, 23; At least in one grocer in New Zealand kept it during the 1920s, *Otago Daily Times* 22 March 1920, 4; *Press* 5 July 1927, 8; It was also advertised in the *Pacific Islands Monthly* July 1957, 55.



announced.<sup>66</sup> Local associations are dropped in favour of exotic flavour, “Here’s a curry with a fresh appeal! A new Indian type curry”.<sup>67</sup> The fresh catch-cry, “True Indian Flavour”, was legitimised by the presence of European authority. A beaming cartoon chef with a tasting spoon was often presented alongside one or two individuals of Anglo origin. At times, Keen’s advertising toed the line of blurring Asian cultures into a generalised oriental “other”. One features an endorsement from Ella-Mai Wong, a “well known Chinese Cookery expert”, who assured consumers the product “has wonderful ways with all kinds of foods.” An advertisement on the same page featured a photograph of Wong in a cheongsam dress, signifying her “genuine” Chinese origins (see figure 12).<sup>68</sup>

Figure 12. "Keen's 1959"<sup>69</sup>

The national promotions offered the continuation of several themes. Quality was an enduring feature.<sup>70</sup> Economy continued to be emphasised with recipes promising to give a “lift to...leftovers” and assurance that it “goes further”.<sup>71</sup> Advertisements were aimed at the aspirational, “subtly and precisely blended to delight the most critical palate, but versatile

<sup>66</sup> AWW 15 April 1957, 78.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> AWW 9 September 1959, 42.

<sup>69</sup> AWW 9 September 1959, 42.

<sup>70</sup> “Finest Quality Curry Powder” was a constant packaging slogan. AWW 16 July 1958, 39.

<sup>71</sup> AWW 16 July 1958, 39; AWW 9 September 1959, 42.

enough to suit the individual tastes of the whole family.”<sup>72</sup> Here again the promise of transformation is made.<sup>73</sup>

## Exotic

In 1963, there was a definite shift in the style and content of Keen’s Curry advertising. The cheerful cartoons of the fifties are replaced with an exotic and mysterious air, saturated in rich yellows and browns, perhaps reminiscent of turmeric or curry (see figure 13). A painting depicts a Mughal scene with a woman offering a dish to a seated man. Both are in “traditional” dress, opulent in robes and jewels.<sup>74</sup> This transition in style visibly reflects a more outwardly looking Australian nation (see chapter two), and inserts Keen’s into an apparently timeless tradition, reinforced by the text, “A curry meal fit for a Maharajah”.<sup>75</sup> The foreignness of curry is softened by the phrase, “for the whole family” and the ingredients for “Madras Beef Curry”, reassure us that garlic is “optional”. As for stock - “beef or Marmite will do”.<sup>76</sup> Keen’s presented their product as exotic, but not too exotic.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Pictures of rabbits were occasionally accompanied by a lobster (as opposed to the locally available crayfish), AWW 15 April 1957, 78.

<sup>73</sup> See also: “Makes good cooks Better!”, visual reinforced by a female cook bequeathed with a toque blanche by the male chef, thus signalling the metamorphosis from home cook to “professional”, AWW 9 September 1959, 42.

<sup>74</sup> AWW 12 April 1963, 72.

<sup>75</sup> And, “*how you make perfect curry Indian style*”, Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> The “Maharajah” theme continued, with the message of “exotic” and “rare” reinforced by a similar colour palate and Henna- like patterns. See for example: AWW 15 July 1964, 43.

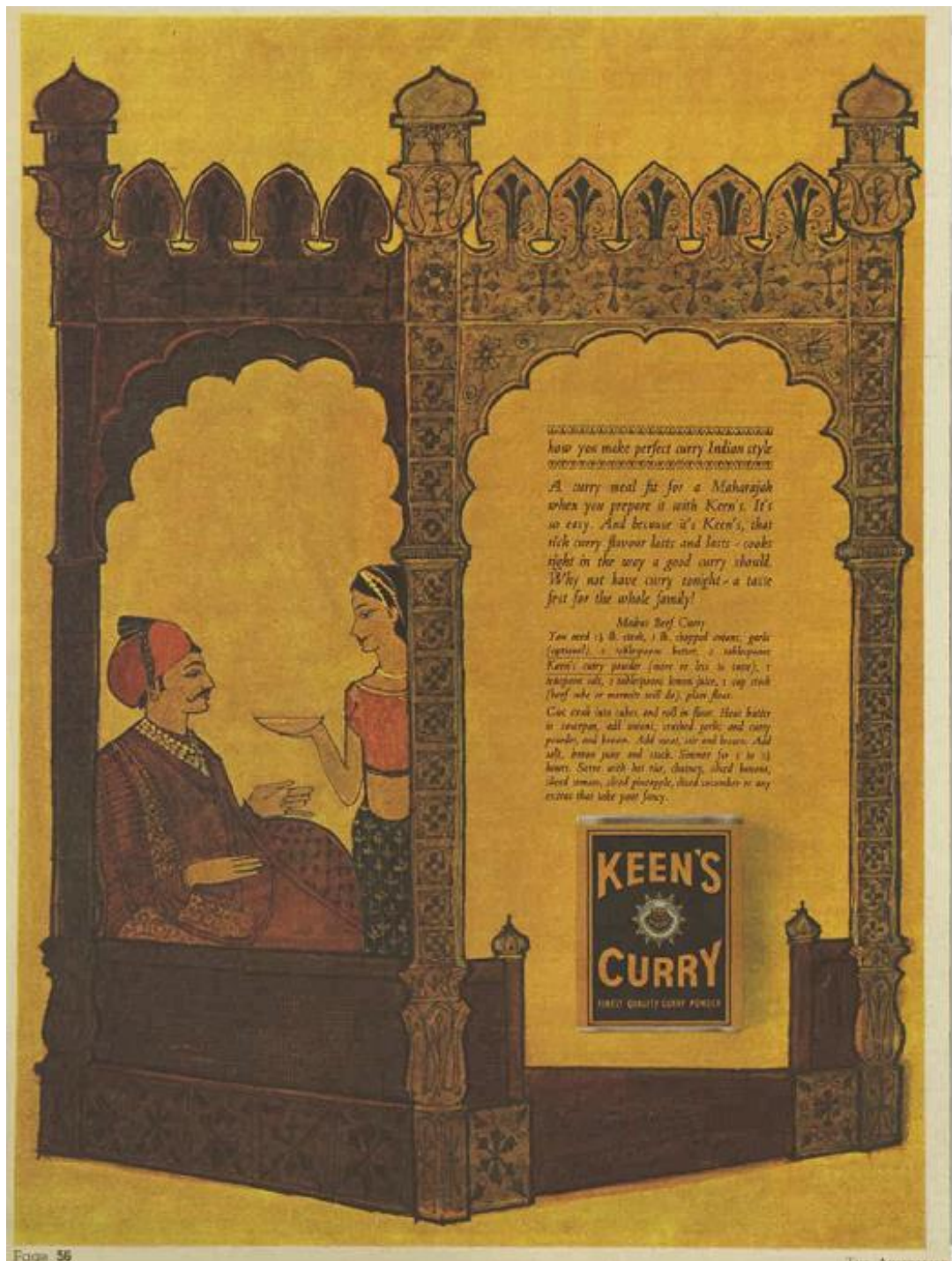


Figure 13. "Keen's 1963"<sup>78</sup>

Demonstrating an increasingly sophisticated, yet selective, understanding of the regional nature of Indian cuisine, Keen's Curry presented an educational advertisement in 1965. Entitled "Curry In India" and featuring a "recipe from North of India, the New Delhi Region", called "Murgh Korma: Spiced Chicken in Yoghurt and Sauce." Despite displaying

<sup>78</sup> AWW 12 April 1963, 72.

heightened cultural knowledge, Keen's did not shy away from broad generalisations, as evident in their interpretation of curry, "To the Indian housewife, "curry" means a richly spiced sauce...Indians curry anything". In presenting cultural information, Keen's effectively connects their product with regional "traditional" dishes.<sup>79</sup>

From 1966 until 1973 Keen's advertised in collaboration with Sunwhite Rice, the largest processor and distributor of Australian grown rice.<sup>80</sup> The "1966 Rice Recipes!" booklet features two curry recipes promising, "that True Indian Flavour". "Keen's Dutch Oven Rice Curry Casserole" and "Keen's Rajah Chicken Curry" were sweet curries, featuring tinned pineapple. These recipes present less sophisticated, more convenient and thus less challenging, interpretations of curry, in order to promote rice to the Australian market.<sup>81</sup> Each product co-advertised in the booklet is illustrated with pictures of the dishes, and a sketched scene depicting the international contexts from which the dishes are drawn. Nearly all feature a white couple seated at a table being served by a local, against a backdrop suggestive of foreign countries.<sup>82</sup> In the Keen's spread, a couple is attended to by a woman dressed in a Sari, a Bindi on her forehead. Visible through an arched window is a building invoking the Taj Mahal. These visual cues are shorthand for exotic cultures, experienced by white tourists suggestively through the dishes presented in the cookbook.<sup>83</sup>

An "Indian Curry and Rice" cookery lift-out was included in a 1968 edition of AWW.<sup>84</sup> This booklet, and corresponding advertising campaign, was centred on the recipes of Jane Nutta-Singh, "an expert and creative cook" of Indian Fijian descent (see figure 14). Among many achievements, Nutta-Singh was a trained midwife, lecturer of Hindi, television and newspaper food personality, and former restaurateur. Similarly to Charmaine Solomon, Nutta-Singh became prominent after entering a cooking competition. She won the AWW's 1962

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<sup>79</sup> Significantly, the recipe gave instructions for the use of individual spices, offering "[y]ou can grind the spices yourself if you wish to do it in the Indian manner, or use...Keen's Curry Powder". This presents an interesting juxtaposition between cultural interest and convenience and commercial intent. While they do not suggest their powder contains the same spices as those included in the recipe, they explicitly suggest their curry powder is an acceptable substitute, AWW 25 August 1965, 58.

<sup>80</sup> Although Sunwhite had many co-advertisers, Keen's appears to have been the most prominent during these years.

<sup>81</sup> Less sophisticated than the 1965 curry recipe discussed above. Rice Marketing Board Cookery Bureau, *1966 Rice Recipes!: For Cooking With The International Touch* (Alexandria, NSW: Conpress Printing, 1966).

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., See for example: China: "Greenseas Tuna Chop Suey With Ginger Rice", and Germany, "Kraft Bavarian Beef Crust Pie".

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Jane Nutta-Singh, "The Australian Women's Weekly Presents: Indian Curry and Rice Book," AWW 1 April 1968, 1-16. Keen's was promoted alongside Sunbeam fry pans, Dairy Foods butter and ghee, Togala condensed milk, and Rosella's "Minit Meals".



“Pineapple contest”, with her recipe for “Pineapple Kofta Curry”.<sup>85</sup> The recipes within the booklet use curry powder, but do not call for a specific brand, and vary in levels of complexity.

**JANE NUTTA SINGH says:**

Try these **quick new rice ideas** with the True Indian Flavour of Keen's Eastern Beef Curry




**EASTERN BEEF CURRY with FLUFFY RICE**

1½ lb skirt or topside steak; 4 tablespoons butter or ghee; 1 onion; 2 cloves garlic; 2 shallots; 1 red pepper; 1½ dessertspoons Keen's Curry powder; 1½ teaspoons salt; pinch cayenne pepper; 1 potato; ½ cup diced carrot; ½ cup shredded cabbage; 2 tomatoes; 1 tablespoon chopped mint; 1 cup pineapple pieces; ½ cup water.

**RICE**  
1 lb Sunwhite Rice; salt; extra flavourings as desired.

**METHOD:** Melt butter in your Sunbeam frypan, add chopped onion and crushed garlic, fry lightly. Add chopped shallots and diced red pepper, cook 2 or 3 minutes. Add meat (cut into one inch cubes), Keen's curry powder, salt and cayenne. Cook over low heat 5 minutes, turning meat pieces frequently so they brown evenly. Then add diced potato, carrot, cabbage and peeled, chopped tomatoes. Cook for 10 minutes then add pineapple pieces and water, cover and simmer for 1 hour until meat is quite tender, adding more water if necessary. Just before serving add meat. Serve fluffy boiled rice with extra flavourings forked through as desired.

Plain boiled rice will always be the world's favourite accompaniment for curry, but just for a change try one of these new simple 'extras' forked through the hot fluffy rice:—

- Fresh lemon juice
- Garlic, salt or crushed garlic
- Parsley and butter
- Chives and butter
- Chopped celery
- Alfalfa
- A dash of curry powder
- Toasted sesame or caraway seeds
- Ground cloves
- Poppy seeds

**Our girl down-under says:**

I'm going to serve them all at my next curry and rice "Smorgasbord" party

If you'd like to know how, send a stamped addressed envelope for the holder "Curry and Rice Smorgasbord—the entertaining thing to do" to RICE COOKERY BUREAU, DEPT. WW29, G.P.O. BOX 432, Sydney 2001.

Figure 14. "Keen's 1968"<sup>86</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Nutta-Singh, "Indian Curry and Rice Book", 2; In 2008, Jane Nutta-Singh also published *Fiji Indian Chef: An Insight into Indian Culture plus 150 Recipes* (Burleigh, Qld: Zeus Publications, 2008).

<sup>86</sup> AWW 22 May 1968, 33.

Within this booklet and the advertising series that followed, it is apparent how curry was deliberately associated with a particular conception of India. Keen's visibly drew on tropes of "authentic" and "traditional" to sell their product. Overtly gendered, the promotions feature two women. The first, Nutta-Singh, always appeared in a Sari with her hair up and silver earrings and bangle, suggestive of Indian origins. In sharp contrast, is a blond woman with her dyed hair out, wearing modern clothing and make-up. She becomes known as "Our girl down-under", and thus can be understood to represent Australia. The marketing presents a binary between India and Australia. The "True" India is traditional and static, whereas Australia is modern, adaptive and sophisticated, incorporating other cuisines where she sees fit. Notions of race and culture are essentialised, with the women kept in separate spaces. Such depictions, consciously or unconsciously, maintain and reinforce racial and ethnic discourses of difference.<sup>87</sup>

The presence of the blond girl reassures Australian consumers that the exoticness of curry, and Nutta-Singh, is acceptable. Speech bubbles from the "Our girl" mediate between Nutta-Singh and the reader, "We love Jane's real Indian recipes. New curry and rice is very nice".<sup>88</sup> In another, "Our girl" interprets Jane's Hindi script, "Jane says that's "Rice is a Bright Idea" (True Indian Style)".<sup>89</sup> Curry is physically and symbolically situated in the space between these cultures. Keen's, and Sunwhite Rice, symbolically takes "traditional" India, signified by Nutta-Singh and her curries, and transforms the food for a modern Australia, meanwhile retaining "authentic" and exotic connotations.<sup>90</sup> Curry became characterised by its ease and convenience, signified by the fancy presentation of the dish in a pineapple, in the shiny stainless steel of Sunbeam, with the modern blond girl voicing her approval.<sup>91</sup>

In 1969 the collaboration with Sunwhite Rice continued, alongside new partner, Tupperware. Messages presented in these advertisements likely contributed to "imprecise culinary image[s]" and confused cultural knowledge, while reflecting heightened Australian

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<sup>87</sup> Angela Jill Cooley, *To Live and Dine in Dixie: The Evolution of Urban Food Culture in the Jim Crow South* (London: University of Georgia Press, 2015), 75, 83, 86.

<sup>88</sup> Nutta-Singh, "Indian Curry and Rice Book", 11, 16; See also: AWW 8 April 1968, 60; AWW 22 April 1968, 33; AWW 29 April 1968, 29.

<sup>89</sup> AWW 29 April 1968, 29.

<sup>90</sup> The new packaging advertised in 1969 underlines Keen's message of transformation. The comparatively stark promotion shows a photograph of a teaspoon of curry powder in front of the tin with a new lid. The text is brief, "Made to an ancient Indian curry recipe. Now with a space age 'shake or spoon' top." Once again, Keen's takes "traditional" Indian curry and transforms it for a modern "space age" Australia, AWW 13 August 1969, 31.

<sup>91</sup> AWW 22 April 1968, 33.

engagement with its geographical neighbourhood.<sup>92</sup> Collaborative marketing sustained the association of curry with leftovers and economy. Visually characterised by large photographs of a particular dish, the advertisements were titled “Famous Asian Curry and Rice Recipe”. The promotions display apparently sophisticated knowledge of Asian regional cuisine, yet offered Keen’s Curry Powder as the appropriate flavour profile. Keen’s was the primary spice used in an array of dishes, from “Besengak Ayam: Chicken Javanese” to “Curried Crepes with Tuna” of unspecified origins.<sup>93</sup> The name of the dish in the language of the country of origin is often promoted, in addition to the use of Sinhalese and Hindi script, suggesting attempts to emphasise authenticity.<sup>94</sup> The exoticness of Asian food was moderated for Australian audiences by Keen’s.

“Australia’s biggest seller” in 1970, stressed the modern and fun, over displays of cultural knowledge.<sup>95</sup> Photographs of dishes were bright, the psychedelic script big, with “groovy” titles such as “The Cool of Curry” and “Scoop of the Season”.<sup>96</sup> The novelty presentation of dishes dominated these advertisements. A “Pinwheel Curried Meat Loaf” recalls a jam roly-poly, with meat loaf as the sponge, and rice and pineapple replacing the jam.<sup>97</sup> Perhaps, as Hoganson suggests, “[t]he embrace of novelty deflected attention from the uniformity of industrial food.”<sup>98</sup>

Keen’s advertising declined dramatically after this point. The brand was taken over by McCormick Foods in 1998, who have continued to produce and sell the curry powder.<sup>99</sup> From the brand’s emergence at the 1866 Melbourne Intercolonial Exhibition to the close of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Keen’s Curry Powder grew from a locally produced Tasmanian product inspired by empire, to a pantry staple across the nation. As an exemplar, Keen’s connects a specific brand to the Australian curry story, and to key themes in that narrative - economy, classlessness,

<sup>92</sup> Lauren Janes, *Colonial Food in Interwar Paris: The Taste of Empire* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 117.

<sup>93</sup> Note the use of “flavour” - Keen’s does not claim to actually *be* Indian; AWW 16 July 1969, 57; AWW 9 July 1969, 30.

<sup>94</sup> See for example: AWW 30 July 1969, 40; AWW 13 August 1969, 48; AWW 3 September 1969, 128.

<sup>95</sup> AWW 8 July 1970, 8.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.; AWW 19 August 1970, 72; AWW 5 August 1970, 6; AWW 5 February 1970, 44; AWW 22 July 1970, 65.

<sup>97</sup> AWW 8 July 1970, 8; “Seafood Salad Indienne”, was served in a moulded cake ring shape with curry mayonnaise dripping like icing over the sides and prawns bursting from the top, AWW 5 August 1970, 6.

<sup>98</sup> Hoganson, *Consumers’ Imperium*, 121; Only one curry recipe is promoted, “Dehli Drumstick Curry”, maintaining Indian associations through visual cues such as ornate dishes, AWW 22 July 1970, 65.

<sup>99</sup> <https://www.mccormick.com.au/History> (Accessed 16<sup>th</sup> October 2017).

abundant resources (whether kangaroo or pineapple), simultaneous meanings of ordinary and other; concerns over purity and authenticity, and ideas around identity and race. Keen's reinforces Tasmania as a significant node in the fabric of empire, and its engagement with international affairs has underlined the island's connections with the world.



## “A Lunch of Smiles”: Conclusion

Today, Tasmania is renowned for curried scallop pies. Shops across the island advertise their “famous” scallop pies, and internet blogs discuss where to find the best pies, and how to make your own. They assert “there’s nothing quite as Tasmanian”, and, “Tasmania is famous for its scallop pies”.<sup>1</sup> One company claims this “quaint tradition...began on the Hobart wharves in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.”<sup>2</sup> While there is little evidence to suggest the combination dates back quite so far, it is possible, and curried scallops feature regularly in print culture from the late 1920s.<sup>3</sup>

Scallops have been fished in Tasmania, initially in the Derwent, since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>4</sup> In 1927, Keen’s Curry Powder suggested their product be cooked with the mollusc, “A lunch of smiles: Scallops curried with Keen’s Curry”, and again in 1932, “Good News - Keen’s Curry and Scallops – They’re bonza.”<sup>5</sup> Remembering that 1932 was the height of the Depression in Australia, these advertisements point to scallops as being a locally abundant and cheap, yet still favoured, food.<sup>6</sup>

In 1933, A New South Wales newspaper published a piece that reinforced the place of scallops in Tasmanian culture. The local informed the unenlightened visitor, “scallops, my dear friend, are famous in Tasmania...scallop pie, simply delicious (lips are smacked in anticipation)...Why! With a pot of good old Cascade...nothing else matters... Scallops have made Hobart famous. Once tasted never forgotten.”<sup>7</sup> A recipe for curried scallop pie from a Mrs. L. Pedder of Bellerive won the weekly “Felicity Field Recipe Competition” in the

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<sup>1</sup> <http://flindersislandfresh.com.au/scallop-pie-recipe/> (Accessed 15<sup>th</sup> September 2017); “some taste like rubber balls in glue”, Stephanie Alexander, <http://www.goodfood.com.au/recipes/small-scallop-party-pie-20111018-29w1d> (Accessed 15 September 2017).

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.tasmanianscalloppiecompany.com.au/> (Accessed 15 September 2017).

<sup>3</sup> The earliest reference found in Tasmanian newspapers comes from 1909: *Daily Telegraph* 21 August 1909, 11.

<sup>4</sup> Tasmanian Scallop Fishermen’s Association, “Code of Practice: Tasmanian Commercial Scallop Fishery,” <http://www.oceanwatch.org.au/Backup/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/Tas-Scallop-CoP.pdf> (Accessed 15 September 2017), 1.

<sup>5</sup> *Advocate* 4 July 1927, 7; A few lines later, “What- O! Dad, Curried Scallops for Tea, and its Keen’s, too”, *Mercury* 30 April 1932, 2.

<sup>6</sup> Scallops were advertised at 2 ½ and 3 pence per dozen in June of the same year; oranges and bananas, cost 1 shilling per dozen, *Mercury* 17 June 1932, 1; Comparatively, scallops were a similar price to sausages, according to one Launceston publican, *Examiner* 15 June 1932, 6.

<sup>7</sup> *North Western Courier* 17 July 1933, 3.

*Mercury* in May 1947 (see figure 15).<sup>8</sup> In the same month of 1950, 1952, and 1954, the same recipe won, attributed to different women in various parts of the state.<sup>9</sup> Apparently “Felicity Field” had a short memory.<sup>10</sup> *The Esk Valley Cookery Book*, first published in 1950, printed the same recipe, entitled “Tasmanian Scallop Pie” and attributed to a C. Blackwell.<sup>11</sup> Under the name, “Savoury Scallops”, the same recipe was contributed by Mrs. J. Blythe, to The CWA’s 21<sup>st</sup> *Birthday Cookery Book* in 1957.<sup>12</sup>

**Scallop Pie Recipe  
Wins Prize**

NOW scallops are becoming plentiful, you will welcome this delicious recipe for scallop pie which won the first prize of 15/6 in this week's recipe competition. The sender was Mrs L. Pedder, York St., Bellerive. Mrs Brooke Skinner, 34 Bay Rd., New Town, was the winner of the second prize of 5/6 for her recipe for quince jam.

Entries in the competition, which are free, should reach "The Mercury" Office, Hobart, by 6 pm, Wednesday each week and should be addressed to "Felicity Field Recipe Competition."

**SCALLOP PIE**

**Ingredients:** 1lb scallops, 1 dessertspoon butter, 1 tablespoon flour, 1 teaspoon dry mustard, 1 level teaspoon curry powder, 1/2 teaspoon salt, 1 cup milk, 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce, squeeze of lemon juice, 1/2 cup bread crumbs, extra nut of butter.

**Method:** Wash scallops well, drain, and place in an earthenware dish. Cover with half the breadcrumbs. Melt butter, add flour, mustard, curry powder, and salt, stir two or three minutes over low heat, add milk and stir until boiling. Carefully fold in sauce and lemon juice and pour over the scallops. Top with the remainder of the crumbs and dot with butter. Bake in a moderate oven 15 to 20 minutes and serve very hot.

**QUINCE JAM**

**Ingredients:** To each good-sized quince allow 1 pint water and 1lb. sugar.

**Method:** Wipe quinces, put into preserving pan whole, and boil with water till soft; remove from pan, and with a fork break away the flesh from the core without removing the skin. Return the pulp to the pan, add sugar, and boil until jam sets.

Figure 15. "Winner 1947"<sup>13</sup>

The story of curried scallop pies draws together many of the threads explored by this thesis. It connects the local (scallops, Keen's), with the exotic (curry). Curry is associated with economy, yet the popular curried scallop pie cuts across class difference. The reappearance of this recipe demonstrates the manner recipes circulate and are standardised through

<sup>8</sup> The "pie" did not use pastry, but breadcrumbs. It was similar to a winning recipe for "devilled scallops" from a Miss C. M. Busby of Westbury, in the *Examiner Women's Supplement* 16 September 1936, 14.

<sup>9</sup> *Mercury* 13 May 1947, 11; In 1950, Mrs. C. B. Lawson of Launceston won, *Mercury* 9 May 1950, 11; 1952, Mrs. J. Tennant of 3 Donald St. Launceston, *Mercury* 20 May 1952, 12; And in 1954, Mrs. L. M. Green of Campbell St. Oatlands, *Mercury* 20 May 1952, 10.

<sup>10</sup> The repetition also reflected seasonal fare, with the scallop season then generally running from April until the end of September, R. A. Perrin and P. R. Hay, "A History of the Tasmanian Scallop Industry, Diagnosing Problems of Management," in *Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Tasmania* 121 (1987), 1-14.

<sup>11</sup> C. Blackwell of Campbell Town; The first edition of this cookbook was published in 1950, with at least eight reprints/ editions until 1999, Country Women's Association in Tasmania, The Esk Valley Group, (1950) *The Esk Valley Cookery Book: Treasured recipes of the Countrywomen of the Esk Valley*. Melbourne: Southdown Press, "New Edition". (Likely mid to late 1960s as the price is listed in both decimal and imperial currencies: "50 cents, 5' -"; See also "Third Edition", "Fourth Edition".

<sup>12</sup> Mrs. J. Blythe of Dennes Point, Bruny Island, Country Women's Association in Tasmania, (1957) *The 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday Cookery Book of the Country Women's Association in Tasmania*, 3 Ed. (Hobart: Mercury Press, 1963), 35-36; A recipe for Curried Scallops, although a different recipe, also appears in A. C. Irvine, "Central" *Cookery Book* 14 ed., (Hobart: T. J. Hughes, 1976), 22.

<sup>13</sup> *Mercury* 13 May 1947, 11.

communities, becoming part of a culture with which individuals identify. From Keen's first association of the two, curried scallops, and curried scallop pies coalesce, and highlight the manner in which inherited British food culture evolved differently in an Australian context, shaped by environmental factors and outside influences.<sup>14</sup> Here again, curry is shown to be part of an Australian identity.

From its first arrival in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, curry illuminated the multiple and complex flows of commodities, people, and ideas through the fabric of empire. It has revealed Tasmania to be an important imperial node, rather than a distant outpost. Curry's establishment and development in local conditions asserts that Australian food culture was not, as often suggested, a simple replication of Britain's. This thesis has demonstrated that curry was familiar enough to make indigenous meats acceptable, be present at Intercolonial exhibitions, and proposed as a national dish, yet was othered, in a conscious attempt to delineate a white Australian identity. Into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Australian food culture was shaped by a growing array of influences, from advertisers to migrants. Food has played an important role in the construction of identity. Here, it has been demonstrated how conceptions of curry corresponded to the negotiation of Australian identity, across race, class and gender. The case study of Keen's Curry Powder has allowed for a deeper exploration of these themes.

Many potential avenues for further research are opened by this thesis. Curry in the context of restaurants has not been explored. The experience of, and role played by, South Asian migrants in serving curry and other foods to a broader Australian population deserves greater attention.<sup>15</sup> Curry could be used in transnational histories exploring connections and contrasting experiences between colonial settler societies. Looking more closely at northern and western areas of Australia would undoubtedly demonstrate a more complex food culture.<sup>16</sup> This thesis is contributing to a broader project of shifting the focus of Australian food studies outward to look at global connections. It has told a story of curry in Australian history. It is a story of empire, nation, food culture, hybridity, identity, and individual taste; one that necessarily illuminates the connections between the local and the global, and the inextricable entanglement of the everyday with larger historical forces.

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<sup>14</sup> I am not asserting the recipe/ combination originated with Keen's.

<sup>15</sup> In line with Krishnendu Ray, *The Ethnic Restaurateur* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2016).

<sup>16</sup> Oral histories would also add depth and colour to a study of curry.

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